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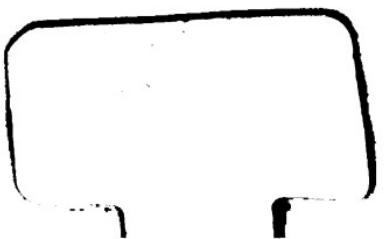
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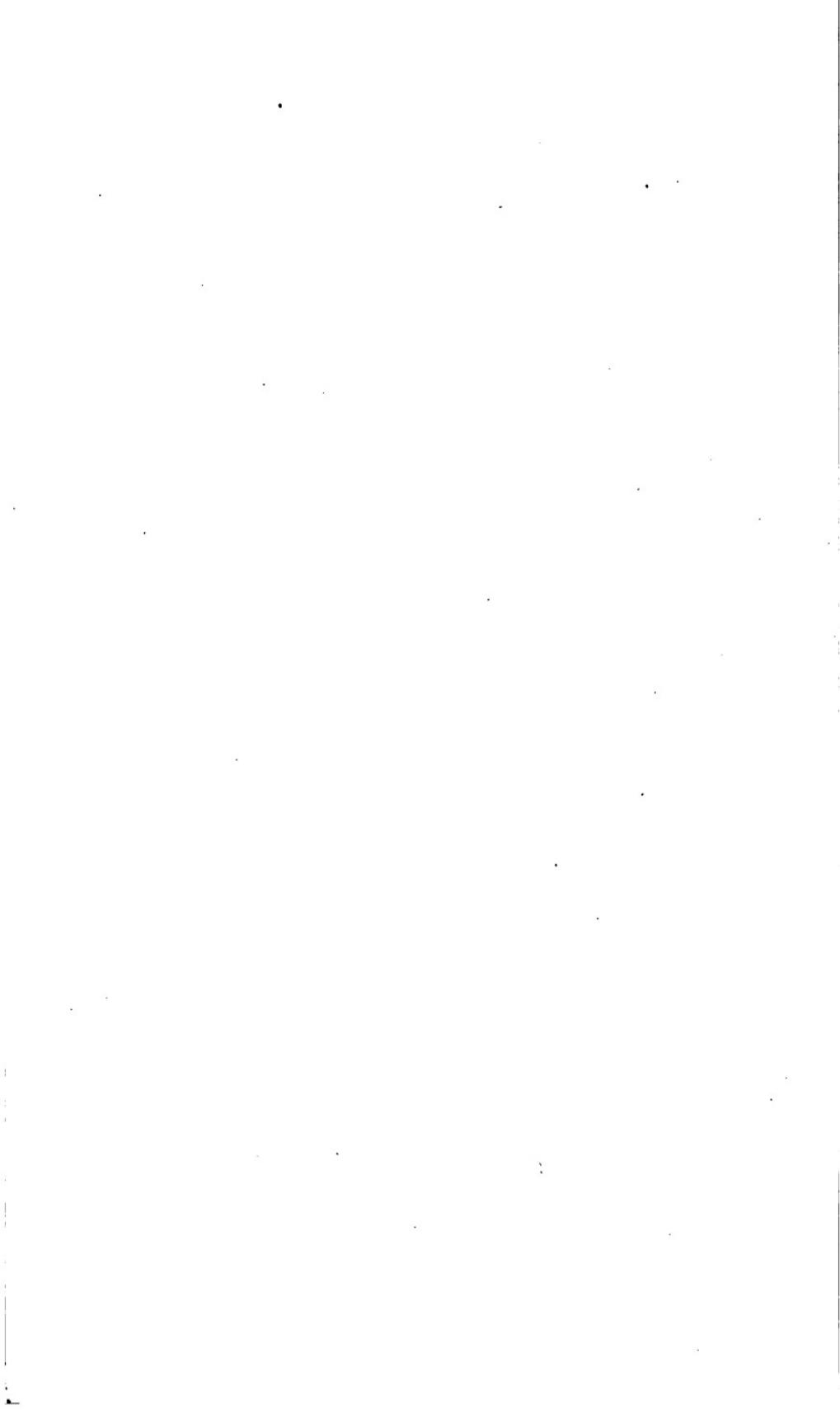
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THE HOME BOOK OF VERSE

AMERICAN AND ENGLISH

1580-1912

With an Appendix Containing a Few Well-known Poems
in Other Languages

Selected and Arranged

By

BURTON EGBERT STEVENSON

VOLUME III
POEMS OF LOVE. PART II



NEW YORK
HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY

1915

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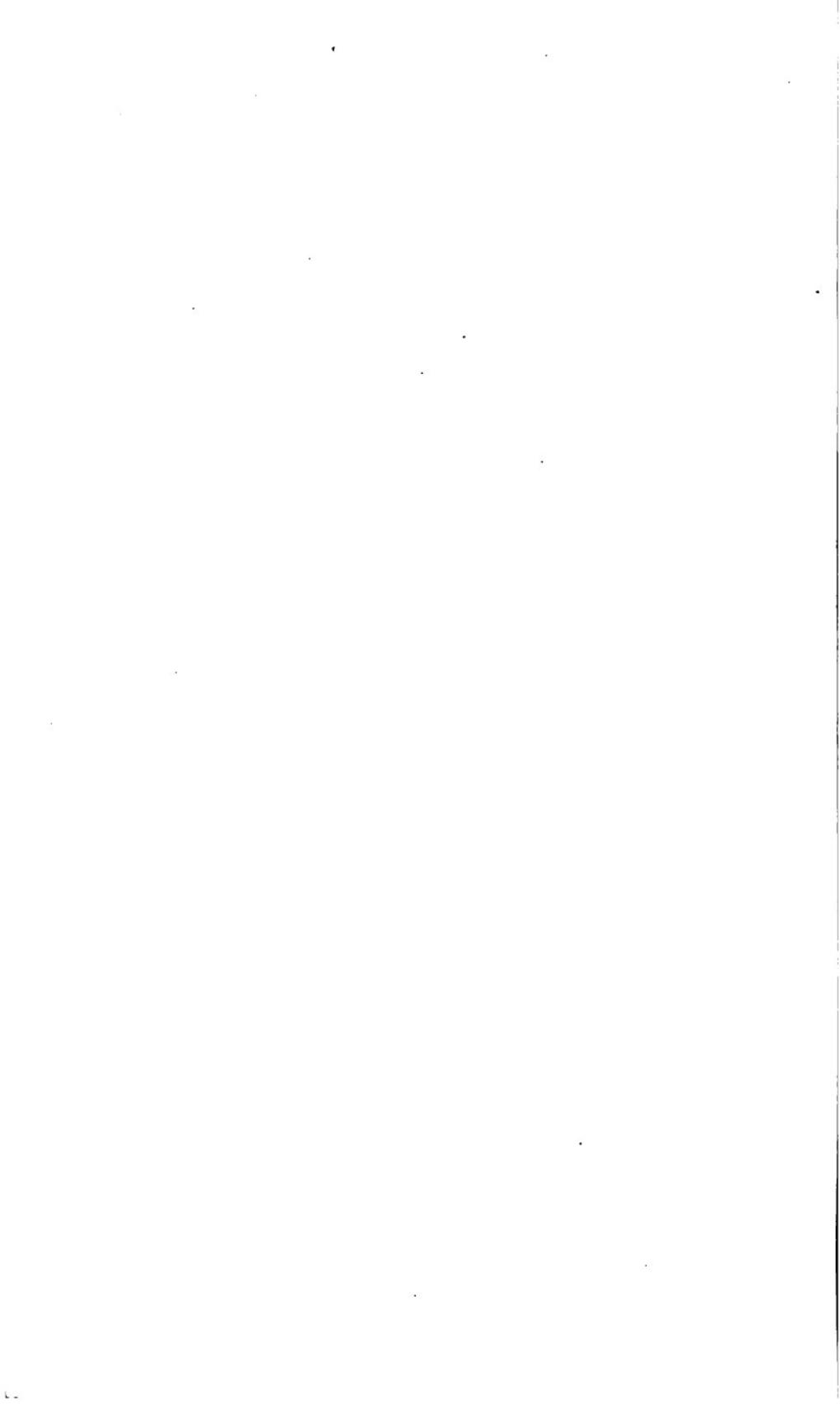
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"Were but my Spirit Loosed upon the Air"	<i>Louise Chandler Moulton</i>	1226
Renouncement	<i>Alice Meynell</i>	1227
"My Love for Thee"	<i>Richard Watson Gilder</i>	1227
Sonnets after the Italian	<i>Richard Watson Gilder</i>	1228
Stanzas from "Modern Love"	<i>George Meredith</i>	1228
Sonnets from "Sonnets to Miranda"	<i>William Watson</i>	1233
Sonnets from "Thysia"	<i>Morton Luce</i>	1235
Sonnets from "Sonnets from the Portuguese"	<i>Elizabeth Barrett Browning</i>	1238
One Word More	<i>Robert Browning</i>	1246

PART II

POEMS OF LOVE

Continued



LOVE'S SADNESS

"THE NIGHT HAS A THOUSAND EYES"

THE night has a thousand eyes,
And the day but one;
Yet the light of the bright world dies
With the dying sun.

The mind has a thousand eyes,
And the heart but one;
Yet the light of a whole life dies
When love is done.

Francis William Bourdillon [1852—

"I SAW MY LADY WEEP"

I SAW my Lady weep,
And Sorrow proud to be advancèd so
In those fair eyes where all perfections keep.
Her face was full of Woe,
But such a Woe (believe me) as wins more hearts
Than Mirth can do with her enticing parts.

Sorrow was there made fair,
And Passion, wise; Tears, a delightful thing;
Silence, beyond all speech, a wisdom rare:
She made her sighs to sing,
And all things with so sweet a sadness move
As made my heart at once both grieve and love.

O fairer than aught else
The world can show, leave off in time to grieve!
Enough, enough: your joyful look excels:
Tears kill the heart, believe.
O strive not to be excellent in Woe,
Which only breeds your beauty's overthrow.

Unknown

LOVE'S YOUNG DREAM

Oh! the days are gone, when Beauty bright
 My heart's chain wove;
 When my dream of life, from morn till night,
 Was love, still love.
 New hope may bloom,
 And days may come,
 Of milder, calmer beam,
 But there's nothing half so sweet in life
 As love's young dream;
 No, there's nothing half so sweet in life
 As love's young dream.

Though the bard to purer fame may soar,
 When wild youth's past;
 Though he win the wise, who frowned before,
 To smile at last;
 He'll never meet
 A joy so sweet,
 In all his noon of fame,
 As when first he sung to woman's ear
 His soul-felt flame,
 And, at every close, she blushed to hear
 The one loved name.

No,—that hallowed form is ne'er forgot
 Which first love traced;
 Still it lingering haunts the greenest spot
 On memory's waste.
 'Twas odor fled
 As soon as shed;
 'Twas morning's wingèd dream;
 'Twas a light that ne'er can shine again
 On life's dull stream;
 Oh! 'twas light that ne'er can shine again
 On life's dull stream.

Thomas Moore [1779-1852]

"NOT OURS THE VOWS"

Not ours the vows of such as plight
Their troth in sunny weather,
While leaves are green, and skies are bright,
To walk on flowers together.

But we have loved as those who tread
The thorny path of sorrow,
With clouds above, and cause to dread
Yet deeper gloom to-morrow.

That thorny path, those stormy skies,
Have drawn our spirits nearer;
And rendered us, by sorrow's ties,
Each to the other dearer.

Love, born in hours of joy and mirth,
With mirth and joy may perish;
That to which darker hours gave birth
Still more and more we cherish.

It looks beyond the clouds of time,
And through death's shadowy portal;
Made by adversity sublime,
By faith and hope immortal.

Bernard Barton [1784-1849]

THE GRAVE OF LOVE

I DUG, beneath the cypress shade,
What well might seem an elfin's grave;
And every pledge in earth I laid,
That erst thy false affection gave.

I pressed them down the sod beneath;
I placed one mossy stone above;
And twined the rose's fading wreath
Around the sepulcher of love.

Frail as thy love, the flowers were dead
 Ere yet the evening sun was set:
 But years shall see the cypress spread,
 Immutable as my regret.

Thomas Love Peacock [1785-1866]

"WE'LL GO NO MORE A ROVING"

So, we'll go no more a roving
 So late into the night,
 Though the heart be still as loving,
 And the moon be still as bright.

For the sword outwears its sheath,
 And the soul wears out the breast,
 And the heart must pause to breathe,
 And Love itself have rest.

Though the night was made for loving,
 And the day returns too soon,
 Yet we'll go no more a roving
 By the light of the moon.

George Gordon Byron [1788-1824]

SONG

SING the old song, amid the sounds dispersing
 That burden treasured in your hearts too long;
 Sing it, with voice low-breathed, but never name her:
 She will not hear you, in her turrets nursing
 High thoughts, too high to mate with mortal song—
 Bend o'er her, gentle Heaven, but do not claim her!

In twilight caves, and secret lonelinesses,
 She shades the bloom of her unearthly days;
 And the soft winds alone have power to woo her:
 Far off we catch the dark gleam of her tresses;
 And wild birds haunt the wood-walks where she strays,
 Intelligible music warbling to her.

That Spirit charged to follow and defend her,—
 He also, doubtless, suffers this love-pain;
 And she, perhaps, is sad, hearing his sighing:
 And yet that face is not so sad as tender;
 Like some sweet singer's, when her sweetest strain
 From the heaved heart is gradually dying!

Aubrey Thomas De Vere [1814-1902]

THE QUESTION

I DREAMED that, as I wandered by the way,
 Bare Winter suddenly was changed to Spring;
 And gentle odors led my steps astray,
 Mixed with a sound of waters murmuring
 Along a shelving bank of turf, which lay
 Under a copse, and hardly dared to fling
 Its green arms round the bosom of the stream,
 But kissed it and then fled, as thou mightest in dream.

There grew pied wind-flowers and violets;
 Daisies, those pearly Arcturi of the earth,
 The constellated flower that never sets;
 Faint oxlips; tender bluebells, at whose birth
 The sod scarce heaved; and that tall flower that wets—
 Like a child, half in tenderness and mirth—
 Its mother's face with heaven-collected tears
 When the low wind, its playmate's voice, it hears.

And in the warm hedge grew lush eglantine,
 Green cowbind and the moonlight-colored may,
 And cherry-blossoms, and white cups whose wine
 Was the bright dew yet drained not by the day;
 And wild roses, and ivy serpentine,
 With its dark buds and leaves wandering astray;
 And flowers, azure, black, and streaked with gold,
 Fairer than any wakened eyes behold.

And nearer to the river's trembling edge
 There grew broad flag-flowers, purple pranked with white,
 And starry river-buds among the sedge,
 And floating water-lilies, broad and bright,

Which lit the oak that overhung the hedge
 With moonlight beams of their own watery light;
 And bulrushes, and reeds of such deep green
 As soothed the dazzled eye with sober sheen.

Methought that of these visionary flowers
 I made a nosegay, bound in such a way
 That the same hues which in their natural bowers
 Were mingled or opposed, the like array
 Kept these imprisoned children of the Hours
 Within my hand;—and then, elate and gay,
 I hastened to the spot whence I had come,
 That I might there present it—O! to whom?

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792-1822]

LONG, LONG AGO

TELL me the tales which to me were so dear,

Long, long ago, long, long ago;
 Sing me the songs I delighted to hear,
 Long, long ago, long ago.
 Now you are come, all my grief is removed,
 Let me forget that so long you have roved;
 Let me believe that you love as you loved
 Long, long ago, long ago.

Do you remember the path where we met,

Long, long ago, long, long ago?
 Ah, yes, you told me you ne'er would forget,
 Long, long ago, long ago.
 Then, to all others my smile you preferred,
 Love, when you spoke, gave a charm to each word;
 Still my heart treasures the praises I heard
 Long, long ago, long ago.

Though by your kindness my fond hopes were raised,

Long, long ago, long, long ago;
 You, by more eloquent lips have been praised,
 Long, long ago, long ago.

But by long absence your truth has been tried,
Still to your accents I listen with pride,
Blest as I was when I sat by your side,
Long, long ago, long ago.

Thomas Haynes Bayly [1797-1839]

THE WATER LADY

ALAS, the moon should ever beam
To show what man should never see!
I saw a maiden on a stream,
And fair was she!

I stayed awhile, to see her throw
Her tresses back, that all beset
The fair horizon of her brow
With clouds of jet.

I stayed a little while to view
Her cheek, that wore, in place of red,
The bloom of water, tender blue,
Daintily spread.

I stayed to watch, a little space,
Her parted lips if she would sing;
The waters closed above her face
With many a ring.

And still I stayed a little more:
Alas, she never comes again!
I throw my flowers from the shore,
And watch in vain.

I know my life will fade away,
I know that I must vainly pine,
For I am made of mortal clay,
But she's divine!

Thomas Hood [1799-1845]

“TRIPPING DOWN THE FIELD-PATH”

TRIPPING down the field-path,
 Early in the morn,
 There I met my own love
 'Midst the golden corn;
 Autumn winds were blowing,
 As in frolic chase,
 All her silken ringlets
 Backward from her face;
 Little time for speaking
 Had she, for the wind,
 Bonnet, scarf, or ribbon,
 Ever swept behind.

Still some sweet improvement
 In her beauty shone;
 Every graceful-movement
 Won me,—one by one!
 As the breath of Venus
 Seemed the breeze of morn,
 Blowing thus between us,
 'Midst the golden corn.
 Little time for wooing
 Had we, for the wind
 Still kept on undoing
 What we sought to bind.

Oh! that autumn morning
 In my heart it beams,
 Love's last look adorning
 With its dream of dreams:
 Still, like waters flowing
 In the ocean shell,
 Sounds of breezes blowing
 In my spirit dwell;
 Still I see the field-path;—
 Would that I could see
 Her whose graceful beauty
 Lost is now to me!

Charles Swain [1801-1874]

"IF THOU WILT EASE THINE HEART"

From "Death's Jest-Book"

If thou wilt ease thine heart
Of love, and all its smart,
Then sleep, dear, sleep;
And not a sorrow
Hang any tear on your eye-lashes;
Lie still and deep,
Sad soul, until the sea-wave washes
The rim o' the sun to-morrow,
In eastern sky.

But wilt thou cure thine heart
Of love, and all its smart,
Then die, dear, die;
'Tis deeper, sweeter,
Than on a rose bank to lie dreaming
With folded eye;
And then alone, amid the beaming
Of love's stars, thou'l meet her
In eastern sky.

Thomas Lovell Beddoes [1803-1849]

"A PLACE IN THY MEMORY"

A PLACE in thy memory, Dearest!
Is all that I claim:
To pause and look back when thou hearest
The sound of my name.
Another may woo thee, nearer;
Another may win and wear:
I care not though he be dearer,
If I am remembered there.

Remember me, not as a lover
Whose hope was crossed,
Whose bosom can never recover
The light it hath lost!

As the young bride remembers the mother
 She loves, though she never may see,
 As a sister remembers a brother,
 O Dearest, remember me!

Could I be thy true lover, Dearest!
 Couldst thou smile on me,
 I would be the fondest and nearest
 That ever loved thee:
 But a cloud on my pathway is glooming
 That never must burst upon thine;
 And heaven, that made thee all blooming,
 Ne'er made thee to wither on mine.

Remember me then! O remember
 My calm light love!
 Though bleak as the blasts of November
 My life may prove.
 That life will, though lonely, be sweet
 If its brightest enjoyment should be
 A smile and kind word when we meet,
 And a place in thy memory.

Gerald Griffin [1803-1840]

INCLUSIONS

Oh, wilt thou have my hand, Dear, to lie along in thine?
 As a little stone in a running stream, it seems to lie and pine.
 Now drop the poor pale hand, Dear, unfit to plight with
 thine.

Oh, wilt thou have my cheek, Dear, drawn closer to thine
 own?
 My cheek is white, my cheek is worn, by many a tear run
 down.
 Now leave a little space, Dear, lest it should wet thine own.

Oh, must thou have my soul, Dear, commingled with thy
 soul?—

Red grows the cheek, and warm the hand; the part is in the
whole;
Nor hands nor cheeks keep separate, when soul is joined to
soul.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806-1861]

MARIANA

Mariana in the moated grange.—MEASURE FOR MEASURE

WITH blackest moss the flower-plots
Were thickly crusted, one and all:
The rusted nails fell from the knots
That held the pear to the gable-wall.
The broken sheds looked sad and strange:
Unlifted was the clinking latch;
Weeded and worn the ancient thatch
Upon the lonely moated grange.
She only said, "My life is dreary,
He cometh not," she said;
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!"

Her tears fell with the dews at even;
Her tears fell ere the dews were dried;
She could not look on the sweet heaven,
Either at morn or eventide.
After the flitting of the bats,
When thickest dark did trance the sky,
She drew her casement-curtain by,
And glanced athwart the glooming flats.
She only said, "The night is dreary,
He cometh not," she said;
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!"

Upon the middle of the night,
Waking she heard the night-fowl crow:
The cock sung out an hour ere light:
From the dark fen the oxen's low

Came to her: without hope of change,
 In sleep she seemed to walk forlorn,
 Till cold winds woke the gray-eyed morn
 About the lonely moated grange.

She only said, "The day is dreary,
 He cometh not," she said;
 She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
 I would that I were dead!"

About a stone-cast from the wall
 A sluice with blackened waters slept,
 And o'er it many, round and small,
 The clustered marish-mosses crept.
 Hard by a poplar shook alway,
 All silver-green with gnarlèd bark:
 For leagues no other tree did mark
 The level waste, the rounding gray.

She only said, "My life is dreary,
 He cometh not," she said;
 She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
 I would that I were dead!"

And ever when the moon was low,
 And the shrill winds were up and away,
 In the white curtain, to and fro,
 She saw the gusty shadow sway.
 But when the moon was very low,
 And wild winds bound within their cell,
 The shadow of the poplar fell
 Upon her bed, across her brow.

She only said, "The night is dreary
 He cometh not," she said;
 She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
 I would that I were dead!"

All day within the dreamy house,
 The doors upon their hinges creaked;
 The blue fly sung in the pane; the mouse
 Behind the moldering wainscot shrieked,

Or from the crevice peered about.
Old faces glimmered through the doors,
Old footsteps trod the upper floors,
Old voices called her from without.
She only said, “My life is dreary,
 He cometh not,” she said;
She said, “I am aweary, aweary,
 I would that I were dead!”

The sparrow’s chirrup on the roof,
The slow clock ticking, and the sound
Which to the wooing wind aloof
The poplar made, did all confound
Her sense; but most she loathed the hour
When the thick-moted sunbeam lay
Athwart the chambers, and the day
Was sloping toward his western bower.
Then, said she, “I am very dreary,
 He will not come,” she said;
She wept, “I am aweary, aweary,
 O God, that I were dead!”

Alfred Tennyson [1809-1892]

“ASK ME NO MORE”

From “The Princess”

Ask me no more: the moon may draw the sea;
The cloud may stoop from heaven and take the shape,
With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape;
But O too fond, when have I answered thee?
 Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: what answer should I give?
I love not hollow cheek or faded eye:
Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee die!
Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live;
 Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: thy fate and mine are sealed;
 I strove against the stream and all in vain;
 Let the great river take me to the main.
 No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield;
 Ask me no more.

Alfred Tennyson [1809-1892]

A WOMAN'S LAST WORD

LET's contend no more, Love,
 Strive nor weep:
 All be as before, Love,
 —Only sleep!

What so wild as words are?
 I and thou
 In debate, as birds are,
 Hawk on bough!

See the creature stalking
 While we speak!
 Hush and hide the talking,
 Cheek on cheek!

What so false as truth is,
 False to thee?
 Where the serpent's tooth is
 Shun the tree—

Where the apple reddens
 Never pry—
 Lest we lose our Edens,
 Eve and I!

Be a god and hold me
 With a charm!
 Be a man and fold me
 With thine arm!

Teach me, only teach, Love!
As I ought
I will speak thy speech, Love,
Think thy thought—

Meet, if thou require it,
Both demands,
Laying flesh and spirit
In thy hands.

That shall be to-morrow
Not to-night:
I must bury sorrow
Out of sight:

—Must a little weep, Love.
(Foolish me!)
And so fall asleep, Love
Loved by thee.

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

THE LAST RIDE TOGETHER

I SAID—Then, dearest, since 'tis so,
Since now at length my fate I know,
Since nothing all my love avails,
Since all, my life seemed meant for, fails,
Since this was written and needs must be—
My whole heart rises up to bless
Your name in pride and thankfulness!
Take back the hope you gave,—I claim
Only a memory of the same,
—And this beside, if you will not blame;
 Your leave for one more last ride with me.

My mistress bent that brow of hers;
Those deep dark eyes where pride demurs
When pity would be softening through,
Fixed me a breathing-while or two

With life or death in the balance: right!
 The blood replenished me again;
 My last thought was at least not vain:
 I and my mistress, side by side
 Shall be together, breathe and ride,
 So, one day more am I deified.

Who knows but the world may end to-night?

Hush! if you saw some western cloud
 All billowy-bosomed, over-bowed
 By many benedictions—sun's
 And moon's and evening-star's at once—
 And so, you, looking and loving best,
 Conscious grew, your passion drew
 Cloud, sunset, moonrise, star-shine too,
 Down on you, near and yet more near,
 Till flesh must fade for heaven was here!—
 Thus leant she and lingered—joy and fear!
 Thus lay she a moment on my breast.

Then we began to ride. My soul
 Smoothed itself out, a long-cramped scroll
 Freshening and fluttering in the wind.
 Past hopes already lay behind.

What need to strive with a life awry?
 Had I said that, had I done this,
 So might I gain, so might I miss.
 Might she have loved me? just as well
 She might have hated, who can tell!
 Where had I been now if the worst befell?
 And here we are riding, she and I.

Fail I alone, in words and deeds?
 Why, all men strive, and who succeeds?
 We rode; it seemed my spirit flew,
 Saw other regions, cities new,
 As the world rushed by on either side.
 I thought,—All labor, yet no less
 Bear up beneath their unsuccess.

Look at the end of work, contrast
The petty done, the undone vast,
This present of theirs with the hopeful past!
I hoped she would love me; here we ride.

What hand and brain went ever paired?
What heart alike conceived and dared?
What act proved all its thought had been?
What will but felt the fleshly screen?
We ride and I see her bosom heave.
There's many a crown for who can reach.
Ten lines, a statesman's life in each!
The flag stuck on a heap of bones,
A soldier's doing! what atones?
They scratch his name on the Abbey-stones.
My riding is better, by their leave.

What does it all mean, poet? Well,
Your brains beat into rhythm, you tell
What we felt only; you expressed
You hold things beautiful the best,
And place them in rhyme so, side by side.
'Tis something, nay 'tis much: but then,
Have you yourself what's best for men?
Are you—poor, sick, old ere your time—
Nearer one whit your own sublime
Than we who never have turned a rhyme?
Sing, riding's a joy! For me, I ride.

And you, great sculptor—so, you gave
A score of years to Art, her slave,
And that's your Venus, whence we turn
To yonder girl that fords the burn!

You acquiesce, and shall I repine?
What, man of music, you grown gray
With notes and nothing else to say,
Is this your sole praise from a friend,
“Greatly his opera's strains intend,
But in music we know how fashions end!”
I gave my youth: but we ride, in fine.

Who knows what's fit for us? Had fate
 Proposed bliss here should sublimate
 My being—had I signed the bond—
 Still one must lead some life beyond,
 Have a bliss to die with, dim-descried.
 This foot once planted on the goal,
 This glory-garland round my soul,
 Could I descry such? Try and test!
 I sink back shuddering from the quest.
 Earth being so good, would heaven seem best?
 Now, heaven and she are beyond this ride.

And yet—she has not spoke so long!
 What if heaven be that, fair and strong
 At life's best, with our eyes upturned
 Whither life's flower is first discerned,
 We, fixed so, ever should so abide?
 What if we still ride on, we two,
 With life forever old yet new,
 Changed not in kind but in degree,
 The instant made eternity,—
 And heaven just prove that I and she
 Ride, ride together, forever ride?

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

YOUTH AND ART

IT once might have been, once only:
 We lodged in a street together,
 You, a sparrow on the housetop lonely,
 I, a lone she-bird of his feather.

Your trade was with sticks and clay,
 You thumbed, thrust, patted, and polished,
 Then laughed, "They will see some day
 Smith made, and Gibson demolished."

My business was song, song, song;
 I chirped, cheeped, trilled, and twittered,
 "Kate Brown's on the boards ere long,
 And Grisi's existence embittered!"

I earned no more by a warble
Than you by a sketch in plaster;
You wanted a piece of marble,
I needed a music-master.

We studied hard in our styles,
Chipped each at a crust like Hindoos,
For air, looked out on the tiles,
For fun, watched each other's windows.

You lounged, like a boy of the South,
Cap and blouse—nay, a bit of beard too;
Or you got it, rubbing your mouth
With fingers the clay adhered to.

And I—soon managed to find
Weak points in the flower-fence facing,
Was forced to put up a blind,
And be safe in my corset-lacing.

No harm! It was not my fault
If you never turned your eye's tail up,
As I shook upon E *in alt.*,
Or ran the chromatic scale up:

For spring bade the sparrows pair,
And the boys and girls gave guesses,
And stalls in our street looked rare
With bulrush and water-cresses.

Why did not you pinch a flower
In a pellet of clay and fling it?
Why did not I put a power
Of thanks in a look, or sing it?

I did look, sharp as a lynx
(And yet the memory rankles),
When models arrived, some minx
Tripped up-stairs, she and her ankles.

But I think I gave you as good!
 "That foreign fellow,—who can know
 How she pays, in a playful mood,
 For his tuning her that piano?"

Could you say so, and never say,
 "Suppose we join hands and fortunes,
 And I fetch her from over the way,
 Her, piano, and long tunes and short tunes"?

No, no: you would not be rash,
 Nor I rasher and something over:
 You've to settle yet Gibson's hash,
 And Grisi yet lives in clover.

But you meet the Prince at the Board,
 I'm queen myself at *bals-paré*,
 I've married a rich old lord,
 And you're dubbed knight and an R. A.

Each life unfulfilled, you see;
 It hangs still, patchy and scrappy:
 We have not sighed deep, laughed free,
 Starved, feasted, despaired,—been happy.

And nobody calls you a dunce,
 And people suppose me clever:
 This could but have happened once,
 And we missed it, lost it forever.

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

TWO IN THE CAMPAGNA

I WONDER do you feel to-day
 As I have felt since, ha—
 We sat down on the grass
 In spirit better than
 This morn of Rome.

For me, I touched a thought, I know,
Has tantalized me many times,
(Like turns of thread the spiders throw
Mocking across our path) for rhymes
To catch at and let go.

Help me to hold it! First it left
The yellowing fennel, run to seed
There, branching from the brickwork's cleft,
Some old tomb's ruin: yonder weed
Took up the floating weft,

Where one small orange cup amassed
Five beetles,—blind and green they grope
Among the honey-meal: and last,
Everywhere on the grassy slope
I traced it. Hold it fast!

The champaign with its endless fleece
Of feathery grasses everywhere!
Silence and passion, joy and peace,
And everlasting wash of air—
Rome's ghost since her decease.

Such life here, through such lengths of hours,
Such miracles performed in play,
Such primal naked forms of flowers,
Such letting Nature have her way
While Heaven looks from its towers!

How say you? Let us, O my dove,
Let us be unashamed of soul,
As earth lies bare to heaven above!
How is it under our control
To love or not to love?

I would that you were all to me,
You that are just so much, no more.
Nor yours, nor mine,—nor slave nor free!
Where does the fault lie? What the core
Of the wound, since wound must be?

I would I could adopt your will,
 See with your eyes, and set my heart
 Beating by yours, and drink my fill
 At your soul's springs,—your part, my part
 In life, for good and ill.

No. I yearn upward, touch you close,
 Then stand away. I kiss your cheek,
 Catch your soul's warmth,—I pluck the rose
 And love it more than tongue can speak—
 Then the good minute goes.

Already how am I so far
 Out of that minute? Must I go
 Still like the thistle-ball, no bar,
 Onward, whenever light winds blow,
 Fixed by no friendly star?

Just when I seemed about to learn!
 Where is the thread now? Off again!
 The old trick! Only I discern—
 Infinite passion, and the pain
 Of finite hearts that yearn.

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

ONE WAY OF LOVE

ALL June I bound the rose in sheaves.
 Now, rose by rose, I strip the leaves
 And strew them where Pauline may pass.
 She will not turn aside? Alas!
 Let them lie. Suppose they die?
 The chance was they might take her eye.

How many a month I strove to suit
 These stubborn fingers to the lute!
 To-day I venture all I know.
 She will not hear my music? So!
 Break the string; fold music's wing:
 Suppose Pauline had bade me sing!

My whole life long I learned to love.
This hour my utmost art I prove
And speak my passion—heaven or hell?
She will not give me heaven? 'Tis well!
Lose who may—I still can say,
Those who win heaven, blest are they!

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

"NEVER THE TIME AND THE PLACE"

NEVER the time and the place
 And the loved one all together!
This path—how soft to pace!
 This May—what magic weather!
Where is the loved one's face?
In a dream that loved one's face meets mine,
 But the house is narrow, the place is bleak
Where, outside, rain and wind combine
 With a furtive ear, if I strive to speak,
 With a hostile eye at my flushing cheek,
With a malice that marks each word, each sign!
O enemy sly and serpentine,
 Uncoil thee from the waking man!
 Do I hold the Past
 Thus firm and fast
 Yet doubt if the Future hold I can?
This path so soft to pace shall lead
 Through the magic of May to herself indeed!
Or narrow if needs the house must be,
 Outside are the storms and strangers: we—
 Oh, close, safe, warm sleep I and she,
—I and she!

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

SONG

From "The Saint's Tragedy"

OH! that we two were Maying
Down the stream of the soft spring breeze;
Like children with violets playing
In the shade of the whispering trees.

Oh! that we two sat dreaming
 On the sward of some sheep-trimmed down,
 Watching the white mist steaming
 Over river and mead and town.

Oh! that we two lay sleeping
 In our nest in the churchyard sod,
 With our limbs at rest on the quiet earth's breast,
 And our souls at home with God!

Charles Kingsley [1819-1875]

TWICE

I took my heart in my hand
 (O my love, O my love),
 I said: Let me fall or stand,
 Let me live or die,
 But this once hear me speak
 (O my love, O my love)—
 Yet a woman's words are weak;
 You should speak, not I.

You took my heart in your hand
 With a friendly smile,
 With a critical eye you scanned,
 Then set it down,
 And said, "It is still unripe,
 Better wait awhile;
 Wait while the skylarks pipe,
 Till the corn grows brown."

As you set it down it broke—
 Broke, but I did not wince;
 I smiled at the speech you spoke,
 At your judgment I heard:
 But I have not often smiled
 Since then, nor questioned since,
 Nor cared for cornflowers wild,
 Nor sung with the singing bird.

I take my heart in my hand,
 O my God, O my God,
 My broken heart in my hand:
 Thou hast seen, judge Thou.
 My hope was written on sand,
 O my God, O my God:
 Now let thy judgment stand—
 Yea, judge me now.

This contemned of a man,
 This marred one heedless day,
 This heart take thou to scan
 Both within and without:
 Refine with fire its gold,
 Purge Thou its dross away—
 Yea, hold it in Thy hold,
 Whence none can pluck it out.

I take my heart in my hand—
 I shall not die, but live—
 Before Thy face I stand;
 I, for Thou callest such:
 All that I have I bring,
 All that I am I give,
 Smile Thou and I shall sing,
 But shall not question much.

Christina Georgina Rossetti [1830-1894]

JESSIE

WHEN Jessie comes with her soft breast,
 And yields the golden keys,
 Then is it as if God caressed
 Twin babes upon His knees—
 Twin babes that, each to other pressed,
 Just feel the Father's arms, wherewith they both are blessed.

But when I think if we must part,
 And all this personal dream be fled—
 O then my heart! O then my useless heart!
 Would God that thou wert dead—

A clod insensible to joys and ills—
A stone remote in some bleak gully of the hills!

Thomas Edward Brown [1830-1897]

THE CHESS-BOARD

My little love, do you remember,
Ere we were grown so sadly wise,
Those evenings in the bleak December,
Curtained warm from the snowy weather,
When you and I played chess together,
Checkmated by each other's eyes?

Ah! still I see your soft white hand
Hovering warm o'er Queen and Knight;
Brave Pawns in valiant battle stand;
The double Castles guard the wings;
The Bishop, bent on distant things,
Moves, sliding, through the fight.

Our fingers touch; our glances meet,
And falter; falls your golden hair
Against my cheek; your bosom sweet
Is heaving. Down the field, your Queen
Rides slow, her soldiery all between,
And checks me unaware.

Ah me! the little battle's done:
Dispersed is all its chivalry.
Full many a move, since then, have we
'Mid Life's perplexing chequers made,
And many a game with Fortune played;—
What is it we have won?
This, this at least,—if this alone:

That never, never, never more,
As in those old still nights of yore
(Ere we were grown so sadly wise),
Can you and I shut out the skies,

Shut out the world and wintry weather,
And, eyes exchanging warmth with eyes,
Play chess, as then we played together!
Edward Robert Bulwer Lytton [1831-1891]

AUX ITALIENS

AT Paris it was, at the Opera there;—
And she looked like a queen in a book that night,
With the wreath of pearl in her raven hair,
And the brooch on her breast, so bright.

Of all the operas that Verdi wrote,
The best, to my taste, is the Trovatore;
And Mario can soothe with a tenor note
The souls in Purgatory.

The moon on the tower slept soft as snow:
And who was not thrilled in the strangest way,
As we heard him sing, while the gas burned low,
“*Non ti scordar di me*”?

The Emperor there, in his box of state,
Looked grave, as if he had just then seen
The red flag wave from the city-gate
Where his eagles in bronze had been.

The Empress, too, had a tear in her eye.
You'd have said that her fancy had gone back again,
For one moment, under the old blue sky,
To the old glad life in Spain.

Well! there in our front-row box we sat,
Together, my bride-betrothed and I;
My gaze was fixed on my opera-hat,
And hers on the stage hard by.

And both were silent, and both were sad.
Like a queen she leaned on her full white arm,
With that regal, indolent air she had;
So confident of her charm!

I have not a doubt she was thinking then
 Of her former lord, good soul that he was!
 Who died the richest and roundest of men,
 The Marquis of Carabas.

I hope that, to get to the kingdom of heaven,
 Through a needle's eye he had not to pass.
 I wish him well, for the jointure given
 To my lady of Carabas.

Meanwhile, I was thinking of my first love,
 As I had not been thinking of aught for years,
 Till over my eyes there began to move
 Something that felt like tears.

I thought of the dress that she wore last time,
 When we stood, 'neath the cypress-trees, together,
 In that lost land, in that soft clime,
 In the crimson evening weather;

Of that muslin dress (for the eve was hot),
 And her warm white neck in its golden chain,
 And her full, soft hair, just tied in a knot,
 And falling loose again;

And the jasmine-flower in her fair young breast,
 (O the faint, sweet smell of that jasmine-flower!)
 And the one bird singing alone to his nest,
 And the one star over the tower.

I thought of our little quarrels and strife,
 And the letter that brought me back my ring.
 And it all seemed then, in the waste of life,
 Such a very little thing!

For I thought of her grave below the hill,
 Which the sentinel cypress-tree stands over;
 And I thought . . . "were she only living still,
 How I could forgive her, and love her!"

And I swear, as I thought of her thus, in that hour,
 And of how, after all, old things were best,
That I smelt the smell of that jasmine-flower
 Which she used to wear in her breast.

It smelt so faint, and it smelt so sweet,
 It made me creep, and it made me cold!
Like the scent that steals from the crumbling sheet
 Where a mummy is half unrolled.

And I turned, and looked. She was sitting there
 In a dim box, over the stage; and dressed
In that muslin dress with that full soft hair,
 And that jasmine in her breast!

I was here; and she was there;
 And the glittering horseshoe curved between:—
From my bride-betrothed, with her raven hair,
 And her sumptuous scornful mien,

To my early love, with her eyes downcast,
 And over her primrose face the shade
(In short from the Future back to the Past),
 There was but a step to be made.

To my early love from my future bride
 One moment I looked. Then I stole to the door,
I traversed the passage; and down at her side
 I was sitting, a moment more.

My thinking of her, or the music's strain,
 Or something which never will be expressed,
Had brought her back from the grave again,
 With the jasmine in her breast.

She is not dead, and she is not wed!
 But she loves me now, and she loved me then!
And the very first word that her sweet lips said,
 My heart grew youthful again.

The Marchioness there, of Carabas,
 She is wealthy, and young, and handsome still,
 And but for her . . . well, we'll let that pass,
 She may marry whomever she will.

But I will marry my own first love,
 With her primrose face: for old things are best,
 And the flower in her bosom, I prize it above
 The brooch in my lady's breast.

The world is filled with folly and sin,
 And Love must cling where it can, I say:
 For Beauty is easy enough to win;
 But one isn't loved every day.

And I think, in the lives of most women and men,
 There's a moment when all would go smooth and even,
 If only the dead could find out when
 To come back, and be forgiven.

But O the smell of that jasmine-flower!
 And O that music! and O the way
 That voice rang out from the donjon tower,
Non ti scordar di me,

Non ti scordar di me!

Edward Robert Bulwer Lytton [1831-1891]

"LOVE ME LITTLE, LOVE ME LONG"

LOVE me little, love me long!
 Is the burden of my song:
 Love that is too hot and strong
 Burneth soon to waste.
 Still I would not have thee cold—
 Not too backward, nor too bold;
 Love that lasteth till 'tis old
 Fadeth not in haste.

Love me little, love me long!
Is the burden of my song.

If thou lovest me too much,
'Twill not prove as true a touch;
Love me little more than such,—
For I fear the end.

I'm with little well content,
And a little from thee sent
Is enough, with true intent
To be steadfast, friend.

Say thou lovest me, while thou live
I to thee my love will give,
Never dreaming to deceive
While that life endures;
Nay, and after death, in sooth,
I to thee will keep my truth,
As now when in my May of youth:
This my love assures.

Constant love is moderate ever,
And it will through life persever;
Give me that with true endeavor,—
I will it restore.
A suit of durance let it be,
For all weathers,—that for me,—
For the land or for the sea:
Lasting evermore.

Winter's cold or summer's heat,
Autumn's tempests on it beat;
It can never know defeat,
Never can rebel;
Such the love that I would gain,
Such the love, I tell thee plain,
Thou must give, or woo in vain:
So to thee—farewell!

Unknown

THE NYMPH'S SONG TO HYLAS

From "The Life and Death of Jason"

I KNOW a little garden-close
 Set thick with lily and red rose,
 Where I would wander if I might
 From dewy dawn to dewy night,
 And have one with me wandering.

And though within it no birds sing,
 And though no pillared house is there,
 And though the apple boughs are bare
 Of fruit and blossom, would to God,
 Her feet upon the green grass trod,
 And I beheld them as before!

There comes a murmur from the shore,
 And in the place two fair streams are,
 Drawn from the purple hills afar,
 Drawn down unto the restless sea;
 The hills whose flowers ne'er fed the bee,
 The shore no ship has ever seen,
 Still beaten by the billows green,
 Whose murmur comes unceasingly
 Unto the place for which I cry.

For which I cry both day and night,
 For which I let slip all delight,
 That maketh me both deaf and blind,
 Careless to win, unskilled to find,
 And quick to lose what all men seek.

Yet tottering as I am, and weak,
 Still have I left a little breath
 To seek within the jaws of death
 An entrance to that happy place;
 To seek the unforgotten face
 Once seen, once kissed, once reft from me
 Anigh the murmuring of the sea.

William Morris [1834-1896]

NO AND YES

If I could choose my paradise,
And please myself with choice of bliss,
Then I would have your soft blue eyes
And rosy little mouth to kiss!
Your lips, as smooth and tender, child,
As rose-leaves in a coppice wild.

If fate bade choose some sweet unrest,
To weave my troubled life a snare,
Then I would say "her maiden breast
And golden ripple of her hair";
And weep amid those tresses, child,
Contented to be thus beguiled.

Thomas Ashe [1836-1889]

LOVE IN DREAMS

Love hath his poppy-wreath,
Not Night alone.
I laid my head beneath
Love's lilyed throne:
Then to my sleep he brought
This anodyne—
The flower of many a thought
And fancy fine:
A form, a face, no more;
Fairer than truth;
A dream from death's pale shore;
The soul of youth:
A dream so dear, so deep,
All dreams above,
That still I pray to sleep—
Bring Love back, Love!

John Addington Symonds [1840-1893]

"A LITTLE WHILE I FAIN WOULD
LINGER YET"

A LITTLE while (my life is almost set!)
I fain would pause along the downward way,
Musing an hour in this sad sunset-ray,

While, Sweet! our eyes with tender tears are wet:
A little hour I fain would linger yet.

A little while I fain would linger yet,
All for love's sake, for love that cannot tire;
Though fervid youth be dead, with youth's desire,
And hope has faded to a vague regret,
A little while I fain would linger yet.

A little while I fain would linger here:
Behold! who knows what strange, mysterious bars
'Twixt souls that love may rise in other stars?
Nor can love deem the face of death is fair:
A little while I still would linger here.

A little while I yearn to hold thee fast,
Hand locked in hand, and loyal heart to heart;
(O pitying Christ! those woeful words, "We part!")
So, ere the darkness fall, the light be past,
A little while I fain would hold thee fast.

A little while, when light and twilight meet,—
Behind, our broken years; before, the deep
Weird wonder of the last unfathomed sleep,—
A little while I still would clasp thee, Sweet,
A little while, when night and twilight meet.

A little while I fain would linger here;
Behold! who knows what soul-dividing bars
Earth's faithful loves may part in other stars?
Nor can love deem the face of death is fair:
A little while I still would linger here.

Paul Hamilton Hayne [1830-1886]

SONG

I MADE another garden, yea,
For my new Love:
I left the dead rose where it lay
And set the new above.

Why did my Summer not begin?
Why did my heart not haste?
My old Love came and walked therein,
And laid the garden waste.

She entered with her weary smile,
Just as of old;
She looked around a little while
And shivered with the cold:
Her passing touch was death to all,
Her passing look a blight;
She made the white rose-petals fall,
And turned the red rose white.

Her pale robe clinging to the grass
Seemed like a snake
That bit the grass and ground, alas!
And a sad trail did make.
She went up slowly to the gate,
And then, just as of yore,
She turned back at the last to wait
And say farewell once more.

Arthur O'Shaughnessy [1844-1881]

SONG

HAS summer come without the rose,
Or left the bird behind?
Is the blue changed above thee,
O world! or am I blind?
Will you change every flower that grows,
Or only change this spot,
Where she who said, I love thee,
Now says, I love thee not?

The skies seemed true above thee,
The rose true on the tree;
The bird seemed true the summer through,
But all proved false to me.

World! is there one good thing in you,
 Life, love, or death—or what?
 Since lips that sang, I love thee,
 Have said, I love thee not?

I think the sun's kiss will scarce fall
 Into one flower's gold cup;
 I think the bird will miss me,
 And give the summer up.
 O sweet place! desolate in tall
 Wild grass, have you forgot
 How her lips loved to kiss me,
 Now that they kiss me not?

Be false or fair above me,
 Come back with any face,
 Summer!—do I care what you do?
 You cannot change one place—
 The grass, the leaves, the earth, the dew,
 The grave I make the spot—
 Here, where she used to love me,
 Here, where she loves me not.

Arthur O'Shaughnessy [1844-1881]

AFTER

A LITTLE time for laughter,
 A little time to sing,
 A little time to kiss and cling,
 And no more kissing after.

A little while for scheming
 Love's unperfected schemes;
 A little time for golden dreams,
 Then no more any dreaming.

A little while 'twas given
 To me to have thy love;
 Now, like a ghost, alone I move
 About a ruined heaven.

A little time for speaking
Things sweet to say and hear;
A time to seek, and find thee near,
Then no more any seeking.

A little time for saying
Words the heart breaks to say;
A short sharp time wherein to pray,
Then no more need of praying;

But long, long years to weep in,
And comprehend the whole
Great grief that desolates the soul,
And eternity to sleep in.

Philip Bourke Marston [1850-1887]

AFTER SUMMER

WE'LL not weep for summer over,—
No, not we:
Strew above his head the clover,—
Let him be!

Other eyes may weep his dying,
Shed their tears
There upon him, where he's lying
With his peers.

Unto some of them he proffered
Gifts most sweet;
For our hearts a grave he offered,—
Was this meet?

All our fond hopes, praying, perished
In his wrath,—
All the lovely dreams we cherished
Strewed his path.

Shall we in our tombs, I wonder,
Far apart,
Sundered wide as seas can sunder
Heart from heart,

Dream at all of all the sorrows
 That were ours,—
 Bitter nights, more bitter morrows;
 Poison-flowers

Summer gathered, as in madness,
 Saying, “See,
 These are yours, in place of gladness,—
 Gifts from me”?

Nay, the rest that will be ours
 Is supreme,—
 And below the poppy flowers
 Steals no dream.

Philip Bourke Marston [1850-1887]

ROCOCO

TAKE hand and part with laughter;
 Touch lips and part with tears;
 Once more and no more after,
 Whatever comes with years.
 We twain shall not remeasure
 The ways that left us twain;
 Nor crush the lees of pleasure
 From sanguine grapes of pain.

We twain once well in sunder,
 What will the mad gods do
 For hate with me, I wonder,
 Or what for love with you?
 Forget them till November,
 And dream there's April yet,
 Forget that I remember,
 And dream that I forgot.

Time found our tired love sleeping,
 And kissed away his breath;
 But what should we do weeping,
 Though light love sleep to death?

We have drained his lips at leisure,
Till there's not left to drain
A single sob of pleasure,
A single pulse of pain.

Dream that the lips once breathless
Might quicken if they would;
Say that the soul is deathless;
Dream that the gods are good;
Say March may wed September,
And time divorce regret;
But not that you remember,
And not that I forget.

We have heard from hidden places
What love scarce lives and hears:
We have seen on fervent faces
The pallor of strange tears:
We have trod the wine-vat's treasure,
Whence, ripe to steam and stain,
Foams round the feet of pleasure
The blood-red must of pain.

Remembrance may recover
And time bring back to time
The name of your first lover,
The ring of my first rhyme:
But rose-leaves of December
The frosts of June shall fret,
The day that you remember,
The day that I forgot.

The snake that hides and hisses
In heaven we twain have known;
The grief of cruel kisses,
The joy whose mouth makes moan;
The pulses' pause and measure,
Where in one furtive vein
Throbs through the heart of pleasure
The purpler blood of pain.

We have done with tears and treasons
 And love for treason's sake;
 Room for the swift new seasons,
 The years that burn and break,
 Dismantle and dismember
 Men's days and dreams, Juliette;
 For love may not remember,
 But time will not forget.

Life treads down love in flying,
 Time withers him at root;
 Bring all dead things and dying,
 Reaped sheaf and ruined fruit,
 Where, crushed by three days' pressure
 Our three days' love lies slain;
 And earlier leaf of pleasure,
 And latter flower of pain.

Breathe close upon the ashes,
 It may be flame will leap;
 Unclose the soft close lashes,
 Lift up the lids and weep.
 Light love's extinguished ember,
 Let one tear leave it wet
 For one that you remember
 And ten that you forgot.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837-1909]

RONDEL

THESE many years since we began to be,
 What have the Gods done with us? what with me,
 What with my love? They have shown me fates and fears,
 Harsh springs, and fountains bitterer than the sea,
 Grief a fixed star, and joy a vane that veers,
 These many years.

With her, my Love,—with her have they done well?
 But who shall answer for her? who shall tell
 Sweet things or sad, such things as no man hears?
 May no tears fall, if no tears ever fell,

From eyes more dear to me than starriest spheres,
These many years!

But if tears ever touched, for any grief,
Those eyelids folded like a white-rose leaf,
Deep double shells where through the eye-flower peers,
Let them weep once more only, sweet and brief,
Brief tears and bright, for one who gave her tears
These many years!

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837-1909]

THE OBLATION

Ask nothing more of me, sweet;
All I can give you I give.
Heart of my heart, were it more,
More would be laid at your feet:
Love that should help you to live,
Song that should spur you to soar.

All things were nothing to give
Once to have sense of you more,
Touch you and taste of you, sweet,
Think you and breathe you and live,
Swept of your wings as they soar,
Trodden by chance of your feet.

I that have love and no more
Give you but love of you, sweet:
He that hath more, let him give;
He that hath wings, let him soar;
Mine is the heart at your feet
Here, that must love you to live.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837-1909]

THE SONG OF THE BOWER

From "The House of Life"

Say, is it day, is it dusk in thy bower,
Thou whom I long for, who longest for me?
Oh! be it light, be it night, 'tis Love's hour,
Love's that is fettered as Love's that is free.

Free Love has leaped to that innermost chamber,
 Oh! the last time, and the hundred before:
 Fettered Love, motionless, can but remember,
 Yet something that sighs from him passes the door.

Nay, but my heart when it flies to thy bower,
 What does it find there that knows it again?
 There it must droop like a shower-beaten flower,
 Red at the rent core and dark with the rain.
 Ah! yet what shelter is still shed above it,—
 What waters still image its leaves torn apart?
 Thy soul is the shade that clings round it to love it,
 And tears are its mirror deep down in thy heart.

What were my prize, could I enter thy bower,
 This day, to-morrow, at eve or at morn?
 Large lovely arms and a neck like a tower,
 Bosom then heaving that now lies forlorn.
 Kindled with love-breath, (the sun's kiss is colder!)
 Thy sweetness all near me, so distant to-day;
 My hand round thy neck and thy hand on my shoulder,
 My mouth to thy mouth as the world melts away.

What is it keeps me afar from thy bower,—
 My spirit, my body, so fain to be there?
 Waters engulfing or fires that devour?—
 Earth heaped against me or death in the air?
 Nay, but in day-dreams, for terror, for pity,
 The trees wave their heads with an omen to tell;
 Nay, but in night-dreams, throughout the dark city,
 The hours, clashed together, lose count in the bell.

Shall I not one day remember thy bower,
 One day when all days are one day to me?—
 Thinking, "I stirred not, and yet had the power,"
 Yearning, "Ah God, if again it might be!"
 Peace, peace! such a small lamp illumines, on this highway,
 So dimly so few steps in front of my feet,—
 Yet shows me that her way is parted from my way. . . .
 Out of sight, beyond light, at what goal may we meet?

Dante Gabriel Rossetti [1828-1882]

SONG

We break the glass, whose sacred wine
To some beloved health we drain,
Lest future pledges, less divine,
Should e'er the hallowed toy profane;
And thus I broke a heart that poured
Its tide of feelings out for thee,
In draughts, by after-times deplored,
Yet dear to memory.

But still the old, impassioned ways
And habits of my mind remain,
And still unhappy light displays
Thine image chambered in my brain,
And still it looks as when the hours
Went by like flights of singing birds,
Or that soft chain of spoken flowers
And airy gems,—thy words.

Edward Coate Pinkney [1802-1828]

MAUD MULLER

MAUD MULLER on a summer's day
Raked the meadow sweet with hay.

Beneath her torn hat glowed the wealth
Of simple beauty and rustic health.

Singing, she wrought, and her merry glee
The mock-bird echoed from his tree.

But when she glanced to the far-off town,
White from its hill-slope looking down,

The sweet song died, and a vague unrest
And a nameless longing filled her breast,—

A wish that she hardly dared to own,
For something better than she had known.

The Judge rode slowly down the lane,
Smoothing his horse's chestnut mane.

He drew his bridle in the shade
Of the apple-trees, to greet the maid,

And asked a draught from the spring that flowed
Through the meadow across the road.

She stooped where the cool spring bubbled up,
And filled for him her small tin cup,

And blushed as she gave it, looking down
On her feet so bare, and her tattered gown.

"Thanks!" said the Judge; "a sweeter draught
From a fairer hand was never quaffed."

He spoke of the grass and flowers and trees,
Of the singing birds and the humming bees;

Then talked of the haying, and wondered whether
The cloud in the west would bring foul weather.

And Maud forgot her brier-torn gown,
And her graceful ankles bare and brown;

And listened, while a pleased surprise
Looked from her long-lashed hazel eyes.

At last, like one who for delay
Seeks a vain excuse, he rode away.

Maud Muller looked and sighed: "Ah me!
That I the Judge's bride might be!

"He would dress me up in silks so fine,
And praise and toast me at his wine.

"My father should wear a broadcloth coat;
My brother should sail a painted boat.

"I'd dress my mother so grand and gay,
And the baby should have a new toy each day.

"And I'd feed the hungry and clothe the poor,
And all should bless me who left our door."

The Judge looked back as he climbed the hill,
And saw Maud Muller standing still.

"A form more fair, a face more sweet,
Ne'er hath it been my lot to meet.

"And her modest answer and graceful air
Show her wise and good as she is fair.

"Would she were mine, and I to-day,
Like her, a harvester of hay;

"No doubtful balance of rights and wrongs,
Nor weary lawyers with endless tongues,

"But low of cattle and song of birds,
And health and quiet and loving words."

But he thought of his sisters, proud and cold,
And his mother, vain of her rank and gold.

So, closing his heart, the Judge rode on,
And Maud was left in the field alone.

But the lawyers smiled that afternoon,
When he hummed in court an old love-tune;

And the young girl mused beside the well
Till the rain on the unraked clover fell.

He wedded a wife of richest dower,
Who lived for fashion, as he for power.

Yet oft, in his marble hearth's bright glow,
He watched a picture come and go;

And sweet Maud Muller's hazel eyes
Looked out in their innocent surprise.

Oft, when the wine in his glass was red,
He longed for the wayside well instead;

And closed his eyes on his garnished rooms
To dream of meadows and clover-blooms.

And the proud man sighed, with a secret pain,
"Ah, that I were free again!"

"Free as when I rode that day,
Where the barefoot maiden raked her hay."

She wedded a man unlearned and poor,
And many children played round her door.

But care and sorrow, and childbirth pain,
Left their traces on heart and brain.

And oft, when the summer sun shone hot
On the new-mown hay in the meadow lot,

And she heard the little spring brook fall
Over the roadside, through the wall,

In the shade of the apple-tree again
She saw a rider draw his rein;

And, gazing down with timid grace,
She felt his pleased eyes read her face.

Sometimes her narrow kitchen walls
Stretched away into stately halls;

The weary wheel to a spinet turned,
The tallow candle an astral burned,

And for him who sat by the chimney lug,
Dozing and grumbling o'er pipe and mug,

A manly form at her side she saw,
And joy was duty and love was law.

Then she took up her burden of life again,
Saying only, "It might have been."

Alas for maiden, alas for Judge,
For rich repiner and household drudge!

God pity them both! and pity us all,
Who vainly the dreams of youth recall.

For of all sad words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are these: "It might have been!"

Ah, well! for us all some sweet hope lies
Deeply buried from human eyes;

And, in the hereafter, angels may
Roll the stone from its grave away!

John Greenleaf Whittier [1807-1892]

LA GRISETTE

AH, Clemence! when I saw thee last
Trip down the Rue de Seine,
And turning, when thy form had passed,
I said, "We meet again,"—
I dreamed not in that idle glance
Thy latest image came,
And only left to memory's trance
A shadow and a name.

The few strange words my lips had taught
Thy timid voice to speak,
Their gentler signs, which often brought
Fresh roses to thy cheek,
The trailing of thy long loose hair
Bent o'er my couch of pain,
All, all returned, more sweet, more fair;
Oh, had we met again!

I walked where saint and virgin keep
 The vigil lights of Heaven,
 I knew that thou hadst woes to weep,
 And sins to be forgiven;
 I watched where Genevieve was laid,
 I knelt by Mary's shrine,
 Beside me low, soft voices prayed;
 Alas! but where was thine?

And when the morning sun was bright,
 When wind and wave were calm,
 And flamed, in thousand-tinted light,
 The rose of Notre Dame,
 I wandered through the haunts of men,
 From Boulevard to Quai,
 Till, frowning o'er Saint Etienne,
 The Pantheon's shadow lay.

In vain, in vain; we meet no more,
 Nor dream what fates befall;
 And long upon the stranger's shore
 My voice on thee may call,
 When years have clothed the lime in moss
 That tells thy name and days,
 And withered, on thy simple cross,
 The wreaths of Père-la-Chaise!

Oliver Wendell Holmes [1809-1894]

THE DARK MAN

Rose o' the World, she came to my bed
 And changed the dreams of my heart and head;
 For joy of mine she left grief of hers,
 And garlanded me with a crown of furze.

Rose o' the World, they go out and in,
 And watch me dream and my mother spin;
 And they pity the tears on my sleeping face
 While my soul's away in a fairy place.

Rose o' the World, they have words galore,
And wide's the swing of my mother's door:
And soft they speak of my darkened eyes—
But what do they know, who are all so wise?

Rose o' the World, the pain you give
Is worth all days that a man may live—
Worth all shy prayers that the colleens say
On the night that darkens the wedding-day.

Rose o' the World, what man would wed
When he might dream of your face instead?
Might go to the grave with the blessed pain
Of hungering after your face again?

Rose o' the World, they may talk their fill,
For dreams are good, and my life stands still
While their lives' red ashes the gossips stir;
But my fiddle knows—and I talk to her.

Nora Hopper [18 -

EURYDICE

HE came to call me back from death
To the bright world above.
I hear him yet with trembling breath
Low calling, "O sweet love!
Come back! The earth is just as fair;
The flowers, the open skies are there;
Come back to life and love!"

Oh! all my heart went out to him,
And the sweet air above.
With happy tears my eyes were dim;
I called him, "O sweet love!
I come, for thou art all to me.
Go forth, and I will follow thee,
Right back to life and love!"

I followed through the cavern black;
 I saw the blue above.
 Some terror turned me to look back:
 I heard him wail, "O love!
 What hast thou done! What hast thou done!"
 And then I saw no more the sun,
 And lost were life and love.

Francis William Bourdillon [1852—

A WOMAN'S THOUGHT

I AM a woman—therefore I may not
 Call to him, cry to him,
 Fly to him,
 Bid him delay not!

Then when he comes to me, I must sit quiet:
 Still as a stone—
 All silent and cold.
 If my heart riot—
 Crush and defy it!
 Should I grow bold,
 Say one dear thing to him,
 All my life fling to him,
 Cling to him—
 What to atone
 Is enough for my sinning!
 This were the cost to me,
 This were my winning—
 That he were lost to me.

Not as a lover
 At last if he part from me,
 Tearing my heart from me,
 Hurt beyond cure,—
 Calm and demure
 Then must I hold me,
 In myself fold me,
 Lest he discover;

Showing no sign to him
 By look of mine to him
 What he has been to me—
 How my heart turns to him,
 Follows him, yearns to him,
 Prays him to love me.

Pity me, lean to me,
 Thou God above me!

Richard Watson Gilder [1844-1909]

LAUS VENERIS

A PICTURE BY BURNE-JONES

PALLID with too much longing,
 White with passion and prayer,
 Goddess of love and beauty,
 She sits in the picture there,—

Sits with her dark eyes seeking
 Something more subtle still
 Than the old delights of loving
 Her measureless days to fill.

She has loved and been loved so often
 In her long, immortal years,
 That she tires of the worn-out rapture,
 Sickens of hopes and fears.

No joys or sorrows move her,
 Done with her ancient pride;
 For her head she found too heavy
 The crown she has cast aside.

Clothed in her scarlet splendor,
 Bright with her glory of hair,
 Sad that she is not mortal,—
 Eternally sad and fair,

Longing for joys she knows not,
 Athirst with a vain desire,
 There she sits in the picture,
 Daughter of foam and fire.

Louise Chandler Moulton [1835-1908]

ADONAI'S

SHALL we meet no more, my love, at the binding of the
 sheaves,
 In the happy harvest-fields, as the sun sinks low,
 When the orchard paths are dim with the drift of fallen
 leaves,
 And the reapers sing together, in the mellow, misty eves:
 O, happy are the apples when the south winds blow!

Love met us in the orchard, ere the corn had gathered
 plume,—

O, happy are the apples when the south winds blow!
 Sweet as summer days that die when the months are in the
 bloom,
 And the peaks are ripe with sunset, like the tassels of the
 broom,
 In the happy harvest-fields as the sun sinks low.

Sweet as summer days that die, leafing sweeter each to
 each,—

O, happy are the apples when the south winds blow!
 All the heart was full of feeling: love had ripened into speech,
 Like the sap that turns to nectar in the velvet of the peach,
 In the happy harvest-fields as the sun sinks low.

Sweet as summer days that die at the ripening of the corn,—

O, happy are the apples when the south winds blow!
 Sweet as lovers' fickle oaths, sworn to faithless maids for-
 sworn,
 When the musty orchard breathes like a mellow drinking-
 horn,
 Over happy harvest-fields as the sun sinks low.

Love left us at the dying of the mellow autumn eves,—

O, happy are the apples when the south winds blow!
When the skies are ripe and fading, like the colors of the leaves,
And the reapers kiss and part, at the binding of the sheaves,
In the happy harvest-fields as the sun sinks low.

Then the reapers gather home, from the gray and misty
meres;—

O, happy are the apples when the south winds blow!
Then the reapers gather home, and they bear upon their
spears,
One whose face is like the moon, fallen gray among the
spheres,
With the daylight's curse upon it, as the sun sinks low.

Faint as far-off bugles blowing, soft and low the reapers
sung;—

O, happy are the apples when the south winds blow!
Sweet as summer in the blood, when the heart is ripe and
young,
Love is sweetest in the dying, like the sheaves he lies among,
In the happy harvest-fields as the sun sinks low.

William Wallace Harney [1831-]

FACE TO FACE

If my face could only promise that its color would remain;
If my heart were only certain it would hide the moment's
pain;
I would meet you and would greet you in the old familiar
tone,
And naught should ever show you the wrong that you have
done.

If my trembling hand were steady, if my smiles had not all
fled;
If my eyes spoke not so plainly of the tears they often shed;
I would meet you and would greet you at the old trysting
place,
And perchance you'd deem me happy if you met me face to
face.

If the melody of Springtime awoke no wild refrain,
 If the Autumn's gold burthen awoke no living pain,
 I would meet you and would greet you, as years ago we met,
 Before our hearts were shipwrecked on the ocean of regret.

If my woman's soul were stronger, if my heart were not so
 true,
 I should long have ceased remembering the love I had for
 you;
 But I dare not meet or greet you, in the old familiar way,
 Until we meet in Heaven, where all tears have passed away.

Frances Cochrane [18 -

ASHORE

OUT I came from the dancing-place,
 The night-wind met me face to face,—
 A wind off the harbor, cold and keen,
 “I know,” it whistled, “where thou hast been.”
 A faint voice fell from the stars above—
 “Thou? whom we lighted to shrines of Love!”
 I found when I reached my lonely room
 A faint sweet scent in the unlit gloom.
 And this was the worst of all to bear,
 For some one had left white lilac there.
 The flower you loved, in times that were.

Laurence Hope [1865-1904]

KHRISTNA AND HIS FLUTE

BE still, my heart, and listen,
 For sweet and yet acute
 I hear the wistful music
 Of Khristna and his flute.
 Across the cool, blue evenings,
 Throughout the burning days,
 Persuasive and beguiling,
 He plays and plays and plays.

Ah, none may hear such music
 Resistant to its charms,
 The household work grows weary,
 And cold the husband's arms.
 I must arise and follow,
 To seek, in vain pursuit,
 The blueness and the distance,
 The sweetness of that flute!

In linked and liquid sequence,
 The plaintive notes dissolve
 Divinely tender secrets
 That none but he can solve.
 O Khristna, I am coming,
 I can no more delay.
 "My heart has flown to join thee,"
 How shall my footsteps stay?

Beloved, such thoughts have peril;
 The wish is in my mind
 That I had fired the jungle,
 And left no leaf behind,—
 Burnt all bamboos to ashes,
 And made their music mute,—
 To save thee from the magic
 Of Khristna and his flute.

Laurence Hope [1865-1904]

IMPENITENTIA ULTIMA

BEFORE my light goes out forever, if God should give me
 choice of graces,
 I would not reck of length of days, nor crave for
 things to be;
 But cry: "One day of the great lost days, one face of all the
 faces,
 Grant me to see and touch once more and nothing more
 to see!"

For, Lord, I was free of all Thy flowers, but I chose the
world's sad roses,
And that is why my feet are torn and mine eyes are
blind with sweat,
But at Thy terrible judgment seat, when this my tired life
closes,
I am ready to reap whereof I sowed, and pay my righteous
debt.

But once, before the sand is run and the silver thread is
broken,
Give me a grace and cast aside the veil of dolorous years,
Grant me one hour of all mine hours, and let me see for a
token
Her pure and pitiful eyes shine out, and bathe her feet
with tears.

Her pitiful hands should calm and her hair stream down and
blind me,
Out of the sight of night, and out of the reach of fear,
And her eyes should be my light whilst the sun went out
behind me,
And the viols in her voice be the last sound in mine ear.

Before the ruining waters fall and my life be carried under,
And Thine anger cleave me through, as a child cuts down
a flower,
I will praise Thee, Lord, in hell, while my limbs are racked
asunder,
For the last sad sight of her face and the little grace of an
hour.

Ernest Dowson [1867-1900]

NON SUM QUALIS ERAM BONAE SUB REGNO
CYNARAE

LAST night, ah, yesternight, betwixt her lips and mine
There fell thy shadow, Cynara! thy breath was shed
Upon my soul between the kisses and the wine;
And I was desolate and sick of an old passion,
Yea, I was desolate and bowed my head.
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

All night upon mine heart I felt her warm heart beat,
 Night-long within mine arms in love and sleep she lay;
 Surely the kisses of her bought red mouth were sweet;
 But I was desolate and sick of an old passion,

When I awoke and found the dawn was gray:
 I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

I have forgot much, Cynara! gone with the wind,
 Flung roses, roses riotously with the throng,
 Dancing, to put thy pale, lost lilies out of mind;
 But I was desolate and sick of an old passion,
 Yea, all the time, because the dance was long:
 I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

I cried for madder music and for stronger wine,
 But when the feast is finished and the lamps expire,
 Then falls thy shadow, Cynara! the night is thine;
 And I am desolate and sick of an old passion,
 Yea, hungry for the lips of my desire:
 I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

Ernest Dowson [1867-1900]

MOST HIGH LOVE

WHY is there in the least touch of her hands
 More grace than other women's lips bestow,
 If love is but a slave to fleshly bands
 Of flesh to flesh, wherever love may go?

Why choose vain grief and heavy-hearted hours
 For her lost voice, and dear remembered hair,
 If love may cull his honey from all flowers,
 And girls grow thick as violets, everywhere?

Nay! She is gone, and all things fall apart;
 Or she is cold, and vainly have we prayed;
 And broken is the summer's splendid heart,
 And hope within a deep-dark grave is laid.

As man aspires and falls, yet a soul springs
 Out of his agony of flesh at last,
 So love that flesh entralls, shall rise on wings
 Soul-centered, when the rule of flesh is past.

Then most High Love, or wreathed with myrtle sprays,
 Or crownless and forlorn, nor less a star,
 Thee may I serve and follow all my days,
 Whose thorns are sweet as never roses are!

Ernest Dowson [1867-1900]

"SO SWEET LOVE SEEMED"

So sweet love seemed that April morn,
 When first we kissed beside the thorn,
 So strangely sweet, it was not strange
 We thought that love could never change.

But I can tell—let truth be told—
 That love will change in growing old;
 Though day by day is naught to see,
 So delicate his motions be.

And in the end 'twill come to pass
 Quite to forget what once he was,
 Nor even in fancy to recall
 The pleasure that was all in all.

His little spring, that sweet we found,
 So deep in summer floods is drowned,
 I wonder, bathed in joy complete,
 How love so young could be so sweet.

Robert Bridges [1844-]

AN OLD TUNE *

AFTER GÉRARD DE NERVAL

THERE is an air for which I would disown
 Mozart's, Rossini's, Weber's melodies,—
 A sweet sad air that languishes and sighs,
 And keeps its secret charm for me alone.

* For the original of this poem see page 3592.

Whene'er I hear that music vague and old,
Two hundred years are mist that rolls away;
The thirteenth Louis reigns, and I behold
A green land golden in the dying day.

An old red castle, strong with stony towers,
And windows gay with many-colored glass;
Wide plains, and rivers flowing among flowers,
That bathe the castle basement as they pass.

In antique weed, with dark eyes and gold hair,
A lady looks forth from her window high;
It may be that I knew and found her fair,
In some forgotten life, long time gone by.

Andrew Lang [1844-1912]

REFUGE

Set your face to the sea, fond lover,—
Cold in darkness the sea-winds blow!
Waves and clouds and the night will cover
All your passion and all your woe:
Sobbing waves, and the death within them,
Sweet as the lips that once you pressed—
Pray that your hopeless heart may win them!
Pray that your weary life may rest!

Set your face to the stars, fond lover,—
Calm, and silent, and bright, and true!—
They will pity you, they will hover
Softly over the deep for you.
Winds of heaven will sigh your dirges,
Tears of heaven for you be spent,
And sweet for you will the murmuring surges
Pour the wail of their low lament.

Set your face to the lonely spaces,
Vast and gaunt, of the midnight sky!
There, with the drifting cloud, your place is,
There with the griefs that cannot die.

Love is a mocking fiend's derision,
 Peace a phantom, and faith a snare!
 Make the hope of your heart a vision—
 Look to heaven, and find it there!

William Winter [1836-]

MIDSUMMER

AFTER the May time and after the June time
 Rare with blossoms and perfume sweet,
 Cometh the round world's royal noon time,
 The red midsummer of blazing heat,
 When the sun, like an eye that never closes,
 Bends on the earth its fervid gaze,
 And the winds are still, and the crimson roses
 Droop and wither and die in its rays.

Unto my heart has come this season,
 O, my lady, my worshiped one,
 When, over the stars of Pride and Reason,
 Sails Love's cloudless, noonday sun.
 Like a great red ball in my bosom burning
 With fires that nothing can quench or tame,
 It glows till my heart itself seems turning
 Into a liquid lake of flame.

The hopes half shy and the sighs all tender,
 The dreams and fears of an earlier day,
 Under the noontide's royal splendor,
 Droop like roses, and wither away.
 From the hills of Doubt no winds are blowing,
 From the isles of Pain no breeze is sent,—
 Only the sun in a white heat glowing
 Over an ocean of great content.

Sink, O my soul, in this golden glory!
 Die, O my heart, in thy rapture-swoon!
 For the Autumn must come with its mournful story,
 And Love's midsummer will fade too soon.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox [1855-]

ASHES OF ROSES

Soft on the sunset sky
Bright daylight closes,
Leaving when light doth die,
Pale hues that mingling lie—
Ashes of roses.

When love's warm sun is set,
Love's brightness closes;
Eyes with hot tears are wet,
In hearts there linger yet
Ashes of roses.

Elaine Goodale Eastman [1863-]

SYMPATHY

THE color gladdens all your heart;
You call it Heaven, dear, but I—
Now Hope and I are far apart—
Call it the sky.

I know that Nature's tears have wet
The world with sympathy; but you,
Who know not any sorrow yet,
Call it the dew.

Althea Gyles [?]

THE PHANTOM OF THE ROSE

SWEET lady, let your lids unclose—
Those lids by maiden dreams caressed;
I am the phantom of the rose
You wore last night upon your breast.
Like pearls upon my petals lay
The weeping fountain's silver tears,
Ere in the glittering array
You bore me proudly 'mid your peers.

O lady, 'twas for you I died—
 Yet have I come and I will stay;
 My rosy phantom by ycur side
 Will linger till the break of day.
 Yet fear not, lady; naught claim I—
 Nor mass, nor hymn, nor funeral prayer;
 My soul is but a perfumed sigh,
 Which pure from Paradise I bear.

My death is as my life was—sweet;
 Who would not die as I have done?
 A fate like mine who would not meet,
 Your bosom fair to lie upon?
 A poet on my sentient tomb
 Engraved this legend with a kiss:
 “Here lies a rose of fairest bloom;
 E'en kings are jealous of its bliss.”

Jerome A. Hart [1854-]

LOVE AND LIFE

“GIVE me a fillet, Love,” quoth I,
 “To bind my Sweeting’s heart to me,
 So ne’er a chance of earth or sky
 Shall part us ruthlessly:
 A fillet, Love, but not to chafe
 My Sweeting’s soul, to cause her pain;
 But just to bind her close and safe
 Through snow and blossom and sun and rain:
 A fillet, boy!”
 Love said, “Here’s joy.”

“Give me a fetter, Life,” quoth I,
 “To bind to mine my Sweeting’s heart,
 So Death himself must fail to pry
 With Time the two apart:
 A fetter, Life, that each shall wear,
 Whose precious bondage each shall know.
 I prithee, Life, no more forbear—
 Why dost thou wait and falter so?

Haste, Life—be brief!"
 Said Life:—"Here's grief."
Julie Mathilde Lippman [1864-

LOVE'S PRISONER

SWEET love has twined his fingers in my hair,
 And laid his hand across my wondering eyes.
 I cannot move save in the narrow space
 Of his strong arms' embrace,
 Nor see but only in my own heart where
 His image lies.
 How can I tell,
 Emprisonèd so well,
 If in the outer world be sunset or sunrise?
 Sweet Love has laid his hand across my eyes.

Sweet Love has loosed his fingers from my hair,
 His lifted hand has left my eyelids wet.
 I cannot move save to pursue his fleet
 And unreturning feet,
 Nor see but in my ruined heart, and there
 His face lies yet.
 How should I know,
 Distraught and blinded so,
 If in the outer world be sunrise or sunset?
 Sweet Love has freed my eyes, but they are wet.

Mariana Griswold Van Rensselaer [18 -

ROSIES

THERE's a rosie-show in Derry,
 An' a rosie-show in Down;
 An' 'tis like there's wan, I'm thinkin',
 'I'll be held in Randalstown;
 But if I had the choosin'
 Av a rosie-prize the day,
 'Twould be a pink wee rosie
 Like he plucked whin rakin' hay:

Yon pink wee rosie in my hair—
 He fixed it troth—an' kissed it there!
 White gulls wor wheelin' roun' the sky
 Down by—down by.

Ay, there's rosies sure in Derry,
 An' there's famous wans in Down;
 Och there's rosies all a-hawkin'
 Through the heart av London town!
 But if I had the liftin'
 Or the buyin' av a few,
 I'd choose jist pink wee rosies
 That's all drenchin' wid the dew—
 Yon pink wee rosies wid the tears!
 Och wet, wet tears!—ay, troth, 'tis years
 Since we kep' rakin' in the hay
 Thon day—thon day!

Agnes I. Hanrahan [18 -

AT THE COMEDY

LAST night, in snowy gown and glove,
 I saw you watch the play
 Where each mock hero won his love
 In the old unlikeness way.

*(And, oh, were life their little scene
 Where love so smoothly ran,
 How different, Dear, this world had been
 Since this old world began!)*

For you, who saw them gayly win
 Both hand and heart away,
 Knew well where dwelt the mockery in
 That foolish little play.

*(“If love were all—if love were all,”
 The viols sobbed and cried,
 “Then love were best whate'er befall!”
 Low, low, the flutes replied.)*

And you, last night, did you forget,
So far from me, so near?
For watching there your eyes were wet
With just an idle tear!

(*And down the great dark curtain fell
Upon their foolish play:
But you and I knew—Oh, too well!—
Life went another way!*)

Arthur Stringer [1874]

“SOMETIME IT MAY BE”

SOMETIMES it may be you and I
In that deserted yard shall lie
Where memories fade away;
Caring no more for our old dreams,
Busy with new and alien themes,
The saints and sages say.

But let our graves be side by side,
So passers-by at even-tide
May pause a moment's space:
“Ah, they were lovers who lie here!
Else why these low graves laid so near,
In this forgotten place?”

Arthur Colton [1868]

“I HEARD A SOLDIER”

I HEARD a soldier sing some trifle
Out in the sun-dried veldt alone:
He lay and cleaned his grimy rifle
Idly, behind a stone.

“If after death, love, comes a waking,
And in their camp so dark and still
The men of dust hear bugles, breaking
Their halt upon the hill.

"To me the slow and silver pealing
 That then the last high trumpet pours
 Shall softer than the dawn come stealing,
 For, with its call, comes yours!"

What grief of love had he to stifle,
 Basking so idly by his stone,
 That grimy soldier with his rifle
 Out in the veldt, alone?

Herbert Trench [1865-]

THE LAST MEMORY

WHEN I am old, and think of the old days,
 And warm my hands before a little blaze,
 Having forgotten love, hope, fear, desire,
 I shall see, smiling out of the pale fire,
 One face, mysterious and exquisite;
 And I shall gaze, and ponder over it,
 Wondering, was it Leonardo wrought
 That stealthy ardency, where passionate thought
 Burns inward, a revealing flame, and glows
 To the last ecstasy, which is repose?
 Was it Bronzino, those Borghese eyes?
 And, musing thus among my memories,
 O unforgotten! you will come to seem,
 As pictures do, remembered, some old dream.
 And I shall think of you as something strange,
 And beautiful, and full of helpless change,
 Which I beheld and carried in my heart;
 But you, I loved, will have become a part
 Of the eternal mystery, and love
 Like a dim pain; and I shall bend above
 My little fire, and shiver, being cold,
 When you are no more young, and I am old.

Arthur Symons [1865-]

"DOWN BY THE SALLEY GARDENS"

Down by the salley gardens my love and I did meet;
 She passed the salley gardens with little snow-white feet.

She bid me take love easy, as the leaves grow on the tree;
But I, being young and foolish, with her would not agree.

In a field by the river my love and I did stand,
And on my leaning shoulder she laid her snow-white hand.
She bid me take life easy, as the grass grows on the weirs;
But I was young and foolish, and now am full of tears.

William Butler Yeats [1865–]

THE PARTED LOVERS

SONG

From "Twelfth Night"

O MISTRESS mine, where are you roaming?
O, stay and hear; your true Love's coming,
 That can sing both high and low:
Trip no further, pretty Sweeting;
Journey's end in lovers meeting,
 Every wise man's son doth know.

What is love? 'tis not hereafter;
Present mirth hath present laughter;
 What's to come is still unsure:
In delay there lies no plenty:
Then come kiss me, Sweet-and-twenty,
 Youth's a stuff will not endure.

William Shakespeare [1564-1616]

"GO, LOVELY ROSE"

Go, lovely Rose—
Tell her that wastes her time and me,
 That now she knows,
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be.

Tell her that's young,
And shuns to have her graces spied,
 That hadst thou sprung
In deserts, where no men abide,
Thou must have uncommended died.

Small is the worth
Of beauty from the light retired:
 Bid her come forth,
Suffer herself to be desired,
And not blush so to be admired.

Then die—that she
 The common fate of all things rare
 May read in thee;
 How small a part of time they share
 That are so wondrous sweet and fair!

Edmund Waller [1606-1687]

TO THE ROSE: A SONG

Go, happy Rose, and, interwove
 With other flowers, bind my love.
 Tell her, too, she must not be
 Longer flowing, longer free,
 That so oft has fettered me.

Say, if she's fretful, I have bands
 Of pearl and gold to bind her hands;
 Tell her, if she struggle still,
 I have myrtle rods at will
 For to tame, though not to kill.

Take thou my blessing thus, and go
 And tell her this,—but do not so!—
 Lest a handsome anger fly
 Like a lightning from her eye,
 And burn thee up, as well as I!

Robert Herrick [1591-1674]

MEMORY

From "Britannia's Pastorals"

MARINA's gone, and now sit I,
 As Philomela (on a thorn,
 Turned out of nature's livery),
 Mirthless, alone, and all forlorn:
 Only she sings not, while my sorrows can
 Breathe forth such notes as fit a dying swan.

So shuts the marigold her leaves
 At the departure of the sun;
 So from the honeysuckle sheaves
 The bee goes when the day is done;

So sits the turtle when she is but one,
And so all woe, as I since she is gone.

To some few birds, kind Nature hath
Made all the summer as one day:
Which once enjoyed, cold winter's wrath
As night, they sleeping pass away.
Those happy creatures are, that know not yet
The pain to be deprived or to forget.

I oft have heard men say there be
Some that with confidence profess
The helpful Art of Memory:
But could they teach Forgetfulness,
I'd learn; and try what further art could do
To make me love her and forget her too.

Sad melancholy, that persuades
Men from themselves, to think they be
Headless, or other bodies' shades,
Hath long and bootless dwelt with me;
For could I think she some idea were,
I still might love, forget, and have her here.

But such she is not: nor would I,
For twice as many torments more,
As her bereavèd company
Hath brought to those I felt before,
For then no future time might hap to know
That she deserved, or I did love her so.

Ye hours, then, but as minutes be!
(Though so I shall be sooner old)
Till I those lovely graces see,
Which, but in her, can none behold;
Then be an age! that we may never try
More grief in parting, but grow old and die.

William Browne [1591-1643?]

TO LUCASTA, GOING TO THE WARS

TELL me not, Sweet, I am unkind,
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind
To war and arms I fly.

True, a new mistress now I chase,
The first foe in the field;
And with a stronger faith embrace
A sword, a horse, a shield.

Yet this inconstancy is such
As thou too shalt adore;
I could not love thee, Dear, so much,
Loved I not Honor more.

Richard Lovelace [1618-1658]

TO LUCASTA, GOING BEYOND THE SEAS

If to be absent were to be
Away from thee;
Or that when I am gone
You or I were alone;
Then, my Lucasta, might I crave
Pity from blustering wind or swallowing wave.

But I'll not sigh one blast or gale
To swell my sail,
Or pay a tear to 'suage
The foaming blue god's rage;
For whether he will let me pass
Or no, I'm still as happy as I was.

Though seas and land betwixt us both,
Our faith and troth,
Like separated souls,
All time and space controls:
Above the highest sphere we meet
Unseen, unknown; and greet as Angels greet.

So then we do anticipate
 Our after-fate,
 And are alive in the skies,
 If thus our lips and eyes
 Can speak like spirits unconfined
 In Heaven, their earthly bodies left behind.

Richard Lovelace [1618-1658]

**SONG TO A FAIR YOUNG LADY, GOING OUT
 OF THE TOWN IN THE SPRING**

Ask not the cause why sullen Spring
 So long delays her flowers to bear;
 Why warbling birds forget to sing,
 And winter storms invert the year:
 Chloris is gone; and fate provides
 To make it Spring where she resides.

Chloris is gone, the cruel fair;
 She cast not back a pitying eye:
 But left her lover in despair
 To sigh, to languish, and to die:
 Ah! how can those fair eyes endure
 To give the wounds they will not cure?

Great God of Love, why hast thou made
 A face that can all hearts command,
 That all religions can invade,
 And change the laws of every land?
 Where thou hadst placed such power before,
 Thou shouldst have made her mercy more.

When Chloris to the temple comes,
 Adoring crowds before her fall;
 She can restore the dead from tombs
 And every life but mine recall,
 I only am by Love designed
 To be the victim for mankind.

John Dryden [1631-1700]

SONG

WRITTEN AT SEA, IN THE FIRST DUTCH WAR (1665), THE NIGHT
BEFORE AN ENGAGEMENT

To all you ladies now at land
We men at sea indite;
But first would have you understand
How hard it is to write:
The Muses now, and Neptune too,
We must implore to write to you—
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

For though the Muses should prove kind,
And fill our empty brain,
Yet if rough Neptune rouse the wind
To wave the azure main,
Our paper, pen, and ink, and we,
Roll up and down our ships at sea—
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

Then if we write not by each post,
Think not we are unkind;
Nor yet conclude our ships are lost
By Dutchmen or by wind:
Our tears we'll send a speedier way,
The tide shall bring them twice a day—
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

The King with wonder and surprise
Will swear the seas grow bold,
Because the tides will higher rise
Than e'er they did of old:
But let him know it is our tears
Bring floods of grief to Whitehall stairs—
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

Should foggy Opdam chance to know
Our sad and dismal story,
The Dutch would scorn so weak a foe,
And quit their fort at Goree:

For what resistance can they find
From men who've left their hearts behind?—
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

Let wind and weather do its worst,
Be you to us but kind;
Let Dutchmen vapor, Spaniards curse,
No sorrow we shall find:
'Tis then no matter how things go,
Or who's our friend, or who's our foe—
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

To pass our tedious hours away
We throw a merry main,
Or else at serious ombre play:
But why should we in vain
Each other's ruin thus pursue?
We were undone when we left you—
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

But now our fears tempestuous grow
And cast our hopes away;
Whilst you, regardless of our woe,
Sit careless at a play:
Perhaps permit some happier man
To kiss your hand, or flirt your fan—
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

When any mournful tune you hear,
That dies in every note
As if it sighed with each man's care
For being so remote,
Think then how often love we've made
To you, when all those tunes were played—
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

In justice you cannot refuse
To think of our distress,
When we for hopes of honor lose
Our certain happiness:

All those designs are but to prove
Ourselves more worthy of your love—
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

And now we've told you all our loves,
And likewise all our fears,
In hopes this declaration moves
Some pity for our tears:
Let's hear of no inconstancy—
We have too much of that at sea—
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

Charles Sackville [1638-1706]

SONG

IN vain you tell your parting lover,
You wish fair winds may waft him over.
Alas! what winds can happy prove
That bear me far from what I love?
Alas! what dangers on the main
Can equal those that I sustain
From slighted vows, and cold disdain?

Be gentle, and in pity choose
To wish the wildest tempests loose:
That, thrown again upon the coast,
Where first my shipwrecked heart was lost,
I may once more repeat my pain;
Once more in dying notes complain
Of slighted vows and cold disdain.

Matthew Prior [1664-1721]

BLACK-EYED SUSAN

ALL in the Downs the fleet was moored,
The streamers waving in the wind,
When black-eyed Susan came aboard;
“O! where shall I my true-love find?
Tell me, ye jovial sailors, tell me true
If my sweet William sails among the crew.”

William, who high upon the yard
 Rocked with the billow to and fro,
 Soon as her well-known voice he heard
 He sighed, and cast his eyes below:
 The cord slides swiftly through his glowing hands,
 And, quick as lightning, on the deck he stands.

So the sweet lark, high poised in air,
 Shuts close his pinions to his breast
 If chance his mate's shrill call he hear,
 And drops at once into her nest:—
 The noblest captain in the British fleet
 Might envy William's lip those kisses sweet.

“O Susan, Susan, lovely dear,
 My vows shall ever true remain;
 Let me kiss off that falling tear;
 We only part to meet again.
 Change as ye list, ye winds; my heart shall be
 The faithful compass that still points to thee.

“Believe not what the landmen say
 Who tempt with doubts thy constant mind:
 They'll tell thee, sailors, when away,
 In every port a mistress find:
 Yes, yes, believe them when they tell thee so,
 For Thou art present wheresoe'er I go.

“If to far India's coast we sail,
 Thy eyes are seen in diamonds bright,
 Thy breath is Afric's spicy gale,
 Thy skin is ivory so white.
 Thus every beauteous object that I view
 Wakes in my soul some charm of lovely Sue.

“Though battle call me from thy arms
 Let not my pretty Susan mourn;
 Though cannons roar, yet, safe from harms,
 William shall to his Dear return.
 Love turns aside the balls that round me fly,
 Lest precious tears should drop from Susan's eye.”

The boatswain gave the dreadful word,
 The sails their swelling bosom spread,
 No longer must she stay aboard;
 They kissed, she sighed, he hung his head.
 Her lessening boat unwilling rows to land;
 "Adieu!" she cries; and waved her lily hand.

John Gay [1685-1732]

IRISH MOLLY O

Oh! who is that poor foreigner that lately came to town,
 And like a ghost that cannot rest still wanders up and down?
 A poor, unhappy Scottish youth;—if more you wish to know,
 His heart is breaking all for love of Irish Molly O!

She's modest, mild, and beautiful, the fairest I have
 known—
 The primrose of Ireland—all blooming here alone—
 The primrose of Ireland, for wheresoe'er I go,
 The only one entices me is Irish Molly O!

When Molly's father heard of it, a solemn oath he swore,
 That if she'd wed a foreigner he'd never see her more.
 He sent for young MacDonald and he plainly told him so—
 "I'll never give to such as you my Irish Molly O!"

MacDonald heard the heavy news, and grievously did say—
 "Farewell, my lovely Molly, since I'm banished far away,
 A poor forlorn pilgrim I must wander to and fro,
 And all for the sake of my Irish Molly O!"

"There is a rose in Ireland, I thought it would be mine:
 But now that she is lost to me, I must for ever pine,
 Till death shall come to comfort me, for to the grave I'll go,
 And all for the sake of my Irish Molly O!"

"And now that I am dying, this one request I crave,
 To place a marble tombstone above my humble grave!
 And on the stone these simple words I'd have engraven so—
 " MacDonald lost his life for love of Irish Molly O!'"

Unknown

SONG

At setting day and rising morn,
 Wi' soul that still shall love thee,
 I'll ask o' Heaven thy safe return,
 Wi' a' that can improve thee.
 I'll visit aft the birken bush
 Where first thou kindly tauld me
 Sweet tales o' love, and hid my blush,
 Whilst round thou didst infauld me.

To a' our haunts I will repair,
 By greenwood, shaw, or fountain,
 Or where the summer day I'd share
 Wi' thee upon yon mountain:
 There will I tell the trees an' flooers,
 From thoughts unfeigned an' tender;
 By vows you're mine, by love is yours
 A heart that cannot wander.

Allan Ramsay [1686-1758]

LOCHABER NO MORE

FAREWELL to Lochaber, an' farewell my Jean,
 Where heartsome wi' thee I hae mony day been;
 For Lochaber no more, Lochaber no more!
 We'll maybe return to Lochaber no more!
 These tears that I shed, they are a' for my dear,
 An' no for the dangers attending on weir,
 Though borne on rough seas to a far bloody shore,
 Maybe to return to Lochaber no more.

Though hurricanes rise, an' rise every wind,
 They'll ne'er mak' a tempest like that in my mind;
 Though loudest o' thunders on louder waves roar,
 That's naething like leaving my love on the shore.
 To leave thee behind me my heart is sair pained;
 By ease that's inglorious no fame can be gained;

An' beauty an' love's the reward o' the brave,
An' I must deserve it before I can crave.

Then glory, my Jeanie, maun plead my excuse;
Since honor commands me, how can I refuse?
Without it I ne'er can have merit for thee,
An' without thy favor I'd better not be,
I gae, then, my lass, to win honor an' fame,
An' if I should luck to come gloriously hame,
I'll bring a heart to thee wi' love running o'er,
An' then I'll leave thee an' Lochaber no more.

Allan Ramsay [1686-1758]

WILLIE AND HELEN

“Wharefore sou'd ye talk o' love,
Unless it be to pain us?
Wharefore sou'd ye talk o' love
Whan ye say the sea maun twain us?”

“It's no because my love is light,
Nor for your angry deddy;
It's a' to buy ye pearlins bright,
An' to busk ye like a leddy.”

“O Willy, I can caird an' spin,
Sae ne'er can want for cleedin';
An' gin I hae my Willy's heart,
I hae a' the pearls I'm heedin'.

“Will it be time to praise this chcock
Whan years an' tears hae blenched it?
Will it be time to talk o' love
Whan cauld an' care hae quenched it?”

He's laid ae han' about her waist—
The ither's held to heaven;
An' his luik was like the luik o' man
Wha's heart in twa is riven.

Hew Ainslie [1792-1878]

ABSENCE

WITH leaden foot Time creeps along
 While Delia is away:
 With her, nor plaintive was the song,
 Nor tedious was the day.

Ah, envious Power! reverse my doom;
 Now double thy career,
 Strain every nerve, stretch every plume,
 And rest them when she's here!

Richard Jago [1715-1781]

“MY MOTHER BIDS ME BIND MY HAIR”

My mother bids me bind my hair
 With bands of rosy hue;
 Tie up my sleeves with ribbons rare,
 And lace my bodice blue!

“For why,” she cries, “sit still and weep,
 While others dance and play?”
 Alas! I scarce can go, or creep,
 While Lubin is away!

’Tis sad to think the days are gone
 When those we love were near!
 I sit upon this mossy stone,
 And sigh when none can hear:
 And while I spin my flaxen thread,
 And sing my simple lay,
 The village seems asleep, or dead,
 Now Lubin is away!

Anne Hunter [1742-1821]

“BLOW HIGH! BLOW LOW!”

BLOW high, blow low! let tempest tear
 The mainmast by the board!
 My heart (with thoughts of thee, my dear!
 And love well stored)

Shall brave all danger, scorn all fear,
 The roaring wind, the raging sea,
 In hopes, on shore,
 'To be once more
 Safe moored with thee.

Aloft, while mountain-high we go,
 The whistling winds that scud along,
 And the surge roaring from below,
 Shall my signal be
 To think on thee.
 And this shall be my Song,
 Blow high, blow low! let tempest tear. . . .

And on that night (when all the crew
 The memory of their former lives,
 O'er flowing cans of flip renew,
 And drink their sweethearts and their wives),
 I'll heave a sigh,
 And think of thee.

And, as the ship toils through the sea,
 The burden of my Song shall be,
 Blow high, blow low! let tempest tear. . . .

Charles Dibdin [1745-1814]

THE SILLER CROUN

“AND ye sall walk in silk attire,
 And siller ha'e to spare,
 Gin ye'll consent to be his bride,
 Nor think o' Donald mair.”

Oh, wha wad buy a silken goun
 Wi' a puir broken heart?
 Or what's to me a siller croun,
 Gin' frae my luve I part?

The mind wha's every wish is pure
 Far dearer is to me;
 And ere I'm forced to break my faith,
 I'll lay me doun and dee.

For I ha'e pledged my virgin troth
 Brave Donald's fate to share;
 And he has gi'en to me his heart,
 Wi' a' its virtues rare.

His gentle manners wan my heart,
 He gratefu' took the gift;
 Could I but think to tak' it back,
 It wad be waur than theft.

For langest life can ne'er repay
 The love he bears to me;
 And ere I'm forced to break my troth
 I'll lay me doun and dee.

Susanna Blamire [1747-1794]

"MY NANNIE'S AWA'"

Now in her green mantle blithe Nature arrays,
 An' listens the lambkins that bleat o'er the braes,
 While birds warble welcome in ilka green shaw;
 But to me it's delightless—my Nannie's awa'.

The snaw-drap an' primrose our woodlands adorn,
 An' violets bathe in the weet o' the morn;
 They pain my sad bosom, sae sweetly they blaw,
 They mind me o' Nannie—an' Nannie's awa'.

Thou laverock that springs frae the dews of the lawn,
 The shepherd to warn o' the gray-breaking dawn,
 An' thou mellow mavis that hails the night-fa',
 Give over for pity—my Nannie's awa'.

Come, autumn, sae pensive, in yellow an' gray,
 An' soothe me wi' tidings o' Nature's decay;
 The dark, dreary winter, an' wild-driving snaw
 Alane can delight me—now Nannie's awa'.

Robert Burns [1759-1796]

“AE FOND KISS”

Ae fond kiss, and then we sever;
Ae fareweel, alas, for ever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee!

Who shall say that Fortune grieves him
While the star of Hope she leaves him?
Me, nae cheerfu' twinkle lights me,
Dark despair around benights me.

I'll ne'er blame my partial fancy;
Naething could resist my Nancy;
But to see her was to love her,
Love but her, and love for ever.

Had we never loved sae kindly,
Had we never loved sae blindly,
Never met, or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted.

Fare thee weel, thou first and fairest!
Fare thee weel, thou best and dearest!
Thine be ilka joy and treasure,
Peace, enjoyment, love, and pleasure!

Ae fond kiss, and then we sever!
Ae fareweel, alas, for ever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee!

Robert Burns [1759-1796]

“THE DAY RETURNS”

The day returns, my bosom burns,
The blissful day we twa did meet;
Though winter wild in tempest toiled,
Ne'er summer sun was half sae sweet.

Than a' the pride that loads the tide,
 And crosses o'er the sultry line,—
 Than kingly robes, and crowns and globes,
 Heaven gave me more,—it made thee mine.

While day and night can bring delight,
 Or Nature aught of pleasure give,—
 While joys above my mind can move,
 For thee, and thee alone, I live.

When that grim foe of life below
 Comes in between to make us part,
 The iron hand that breaks our band,
 It breaks my bliss,—it breaks my heart.

Robert Burns [1759-1796]

MY BONNIE MARY

Go fetch to me a pint o' wine,
 And fill it in a silver tassie,
 That I may drink, before I go,
 A service to my bonnie lassie.
 The boat rocks at the pier o' Leith,
 Fu' loud the wind blaws frae the ferry,
 The ship rides by the Berwick-law,
 And I maun leave my bonnie Mary.

The trumpets sound, the banners fly,
 The glittering spears are rankèd ready;
 The shouts o' war are heard afar,
 The battle closes thick and bloody;
 But it's no the roar o' sea or shore
 Wad mak me langer wish to tarry;
 Nor shout o' war that's heard afar—
 It's leaving thee, my bonnie Mary!

Robert Burns [1759-1796]

A RED, RED ROSE

O, my luve's like a red, red rose
 That's newly sprung in June;
 O, my luve's like the melodie
 That's sweetly played in tune.

As fair thou art, my bonnie lass,
So deep in luv am I;
And I will luv thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry.

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun;
I will luv thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare-thee-weel, my only luv!
And fare-thee-weel a while!
And I will come again, my luv,
Though it were ten thousand mile.

Robert Burns [1759-1796]

I LOVE MY JEAN

Or a' the airts the wind can blaw
I dearly like the west,
For there the bonnie lassie lives,
The lassie I lo'e best:
There's wild woods grow, and rivers row,
And monie a hill between;
But day and night my fancy's flight
Is ever wi' my Jean.

I see her in the dewy flowers,
I see her sweet and fair:
I hear her in the tunefu' birds,
I hear her charm the air:
There's not a bonnie flower that springs
By fountain, shaw, or green,
There's not a bonnie bird that sings
But minds me o' my Jean.

O blaw ye westlin winds, blaw saft
Amang the leafy trees;
Wi' balmy gale, frae hill and dale
Bring hame the laden bees;

And bring the lassie back to me
 That's aye sae neat and clean;
 Ae smile o' her wad banish care,
 Sae charming is my Jean.

What sighs and vows amang the knowes
 Hae passed between us twa!
 How fond to meet, how wae to part
 That night she gaed awa!
 The Powers aboon can only ken
 To whom the heart is seen,
 That name can be sae dear to me
 As my sweet lovely Jean!

The first two stanzas by Robert Burns [1759-1796]
The last two by John Hamilton [1761-1814]

THE ROVER'S ADIEU

From "Rokeby"

"A WEARY lot is thine, fair maid,
 A weary lot is thine!
 To pull the thorn thy brow to braid,
 And press the rue for wine.
 A lightsome eye, a soldier's mien,
 A feather of the blue,
 A doublet of the Lincoln green—
 No more of me ye knew,
 My Love!
 No more of me ye knew.

"This morn is merry June, I trow,
 The rose is budding fain;
 But she shall bloom in winter snow
 Ere we two meet again."
 —He turned his charger as he spake
 Upon the river shore,
 He gave the bridle-reins a shake,
 Said "Adieu for evermore,
 My Love!
 And adieu for evermore."

Walter Scott [1771-1832]

“LOUDOUN’S BONNIE WOODS AND BRAES”

“LOUDOUN’s bonnie woods and braes,
I maun lea’ them a’, lassie;
Wha can thole when Britain’s faes
Wad gi’e Britons law, lassie?
Wha wad shun the field o’ danger?
Wha frae fame wad live a stranger?
Now when freedom bids avenge her,
Wha wad shun her ca’, lassie?
Loudoun’s bonnie woods and braes
Hae seen our happy bridal days,
And gentle Hope shall soothe thy waes
When I am far awa’, lassie.”

“Hark! the swelling bugle sings,
Yielding joy to thee, laddie,
But the dolefu’ bugle brings
Waefu’ thoughts to me, laddie.
Lanely I maun climb the mountain,
Lanely stray beside the fountain,
Still the weary moments countin’,
Far frae love and thee, laddie.
O’er the gory fields of war,
When Vengeance drives his crimson car,
Thou’lt maybe fa’, frae me afar,
And nane to close thy e’e, laddie.”

“O! resume thy wonted smile!
O! suppress thy fears, lassie!
Glorious honor crowns the toil
That the soldier shares, lassie;
Heaven will shield thy faithful lover
Till the vengeful strife is over;
Then we’ll meet nae mair to sever;
Till the day we dee, lassie.
’Midst our bonnie woods and braes
We’ll spend our peaceful, happy days,
As blithe’s yon lightsome lamb that plays
On Loudoun’s flowery lea, lassie.”

Robert Tannahill [1774-1810]

"FARE THEE WELL"

FARE thee well! and if for ever,
Still for ever, fare *thee well*:
Even though unforgiving, never
'Gainst thee shall my heart rebel.

Would that breast were bared before thee
Where thy head so oft hath lain,
While that placid sleep came o'er thee
—Which thou ne'er canst know again:

Would that breast, by thee glanced over,
Every inmost thought could show!
Then thou wouldest at last discover
'Twas not well to spurn it so.

Though the world for this command thee,—
Though it smile upon the blow,
Even its praises must offend thee,
Founded on another's woe:

Though my many faults defaced me,
Could no other arm be found
Than the one which once embraced me,
To inflict a cureless wound?

Yet, oh yet, thyself deceive not;
Love may sink by slow decay,
But by sudden wrench, believe not
Hearts can thus be torn away:

Still thine own its life retaineth;—
Still must mine, though bleeding, beat;
And the undying thought which paineth
Is—that we no more may meet.

These are words of deeper sorrow
Than the wail above the dead;
Both shall live, but every morrow
Wake us from a widowed bed.

And when thou wouldest solace gather,
When our child’s first accents flow,
Wilt thou teach her to say “Father!”
Though his care she must forego?

When her little hands shall press thee,
When her lip to thine is pressed,
Think of him whose prayer shall bless thee,
Think of him thy love had blessed!

Should her lineaments resemble
Those thou nevermore may’st see,
Then thy heart will softly tremble
With a pulse yet true to me.

All my faults perchance thou knowest,
All my madness none can know;
All my hopes, where’er thou goest,
Whither, yet with *thee* they go.

Every feeling hath been shaken;
Pride, which not a world could bow,
Bows to thee,—by thee forsaken,
Even my soul forsakes me now:

But ‘tis done,—all words are idle,—
Words from me are vainer still;
But the thoughts we cannot bridle
Force their way without the will.

Fare thee well!—thus disunited,
Torn from every nearer tie,
Seared in heart, and lone, and blighted,
More than this I scarce can die.

George Gordon Byron [1788-1824]

“MAID OF ATHENS, ERE WE PART”

MAID of Athens, ere we part,
Give, oh, give me back my heart!

Or, since that has left my breast,
 Keep it now, and take the rest!
 Hear my vow before I go,
Zώη μοῦ, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.

By those tresses unconfined,
 Wooed by each Aegean wind;
 By those lids whose jetty fringe
 Kiss thy soft cheeks' blooming tinge;
 By those wild eyes like the roe,
Zώη μοῦ, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.

By that lip I long to taste;
 By that zone-encircled waist;
 By all the token-flowers that tell
 What words can never speak so well;
 By love's alternate joy and woe,
Zώη μοῦ, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.

Maid of Athens! I am gone:
 Think of me, sweet! when alone.
 Though I fly to Istambol,
 Athens holds my heart and soul:
 Can I cease to love thee? No!
Zώη μοῦ, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.

George Gordon Byron [1788-1824]

“WHEN WE TWO PARTED”

WHEN we two parted
 In silence and tears,
 Half broken-hearted,
 To sever for years,
 Pale grew thy cheek and cold,
 Colder thy kiss;
 Truly that hour foretold
 Sorrow to this!

The dew of the morning
 Sunk chill on my brow;
 It felt like the warning
 Of what I feel now.

Thy vows are all broken,
And light is thy fame:
I hear thy name spoken
And share in its shame.

They name thee before me,
A knell to mine ear;
A shudder comes o'er me—
Why wert thou so dear?
They know not I knew thee
Who knew thee too well:
Long, long shall I rue thee
Too deeply to tell.

In secret we met:
In silence I grieve
That thy heart could forget,
Thy spirit deceive.
If I should meet thee
After long years,
How should I greet thee?—
With silence and tears.

George Gordon Byron [1788-1824]

“GO, FORGET ME”

Go, forget me! Why should sorrow
O'er that brow a shadow fling?
Go, forget me,—and to-morrow
Brightly smile and sweetly sing.
Smile—though I shall not be near thee.
Sing—though I shall never hear thee.
May thy soul with pleasure shine,
Lasting as the gloom of mine.

Like the sun, thy presence glowing
Clothes the meanest things in light;
And when thou, like him, art going,
Loveliest objects fade in night.
All things looked so bright about thee,
That they nothing seem without thee;

By that pure and lucid mind
Earthly things are too refined.

Go, thou vision, wildly gleaming,
Softly on my soul that fell;
Go, for me no longer beaming—
Hope and Beauty, fare ye well!
Go, and all that once delighted
Take—and leave me, all benighted,
Glory's burning, generous swell,
Fancy, and the poet's shell.

Charles Wolfe [1791-1823]

LAST NIGHT

I SAT with one I love last night,
She sang to me an olden strain;
In former times it woke delight,
Last night—but pain.

Last night we saw the stars arise,
But clouds soon dimmed the ether blue:
And when we sought each other's eyes
Tears dimmed them too!

We paced along our favorite walk,
But paced in silence broken-hearted:
Of old we used to smile and talk;
Last night—we parted.

George Darley [1795-1846]

ADIEU

LET time and chance combine, combine,
Let time and chance combine;
The fairest love from heaven above,
That love of yours was mine,
My dear,
That love of yours was mine.

The past is fled and gone, and gone,
 The past is fled and gone;
 If naught but pain to me remain,
 I'll fare in memory on,
 My dear,
 I'll fare in memory on.

The saddest tears must fall, must fall,
 The saddest tears must fall;
 In weal or woe, in this world below,
 I love you ever and all,
 My dear,
 I love you ever and all.

A long road full of pain, of pain,
 A long road full of pain;
 One soul, one heart, sworn ne'er to part,—
 We ne'er can meet again,
 My dear,
 We ne'er can meet again.

Hard fate will not allow, allow,
 Hard fate will not allow;
 We blessed were as the angels are,—
 Adieu forever now,
 My dear,
 Adieu forever now.

Thomas Carlyle [1795-1881]

JEANIE MORRISON

I'VE wandered east, I've wandered west,
 Through mony a weary way;
 But never, never can forget
 The luv o' life's young day!
 The fire that's blawn on Beltane e'en,
 May weel be black gin Yule;
 But blacker fa' awaits the heart
 Where first fond luv grows cule.

O dear, dear Jeanie Morrison,
 The thochts o' bygane years
 Still fling their shadows owre my path,
 And blind my een wi' tears:
 They blind my een wi' saut, saut tears,
 And sair and sick I pine,
 As Memory idly summons up
 The blithe blinks o' langsyne.

'Twas then we luvit ilk ither weel,
 'Twas then we twa did part;
 Sweet time, sad time!—twa bairns at schule,
 Twa bairns, and but ae heart!
 'Twas then we sat on ae laigh bink,
 To leir ilk ither lear;
 And tones, and looks, and smiles were shed,
 Remembered evermair.

I wonder, Jeanie, aften yet,
 When sitting on that bink,
 Cheek touchin' cheek, loof locked in loof,
 What our wee heads could think!
 When baith bent doun owre ae braid page,
 Wi' ae buik on our knee,
 Thy lips were on thy lesson, but
 My lesson was in thee.

Oh, mind ye how we hung our heads,
 How cheeks brent red wi' shame,
 Whene'er the schule-weans, laughin', said,
 We cleek'd thegither hame?
 And mind ye o' the Saturdays
 (The schule then skail't at noon),
 When we ran aff to speel the braes—
 The broomy braes o' June?

My head rins round and round about,
 My heart flows like a sea,
 As, ane by ane, the thochts rush back
 O' schule-time and o' thee.

Oh, mornin' life! Oh, mornin' luve!
 Oh, lichtsome days and lang,
When hinnied hopes around our hearts,
 Like simmer blossoms, sprang!

Oh, mind ye, luve, how aft we left
 The deavin' dinsome toun,
To wander by the green burnside,
 And hear its waters croon?
The simmer leaves hung owre our heads,
 The flowers burst round our feet,
And in the gloamin' o' the wud
 The throssil whusslit sweet.

The throssil whusslit in the wud,
 The burn sung to the trees,
And we, with Nature's heart in tune,
 Concerted harmonies;
And on the knowe abune the burn
 For hours thegither sat
In the silentness o' joy, till baith
 Wi' very gladness grat.

Ay, ay, dear Jeanie Morrison,
 Tears trinkled doun your cheek,
Like dew-beads on a rose, yet nane
 Had ony power to speak!
That was a time, a blessed time,
 When hearts were fresh and young,
When freely gushed all feelings forth,
 Unsyllabled—unsung!

I marvel, Jeanie Morrison,
 Gin I hae been to thee
As closely twined wi' earliest thochts
 As ye hae been to me?
Oh! tell me gin their music fills
 Thine ear as it does mine;
Oh! say gin e'er your heart grows great
 Wi' dreamings o' langsyne?

I've wandered east, I've wandered west,
 I've borne a weary lot;
 But in my wanderings, far or near,
 Ye never were forgot.
 The fount that first burst frae this heart,
 Still travels on it way;
 And channels deeper as it rins
 The luve o' life's young day.

O dear, dear Jeanie Morrison,
 Since we were sindered young,
 I've never seen your face, nor heard
 The music o' your tongue;
 But I could hug all wretchedness,
 And happy could I dee,
 Did I but ken your heart still dreamed
 O' bygane days and me!

William Motherwell [1797-1835]

"WHAT WILL YOU DO, LOVE?"

From "Handy Andy"

"WHAT will you do, love, when I am going
 With white sail flowing;
 The seas beyond—
 What will you do, love, when waves divide us,
 And friends may chide us
 For being fond?"

"Though waves divide us—and friends be chiding,
 In faith abiding,
 I'll still be true!
 And I'll pray for thee on the stormy ocean,
 In deep devotion—
 That's what I'll do!"

"What would you do, love, if distant tidings
 Thy fond confidings
 Should undermine?—
 And I abiding 'neath sultry skies,
 Should think other eyes
 Were as bright as thine?"

"Oh, name it not:—though guilt and shame
 Were on thy name,
 I'd still be true:
 But that heart of thine—should another share it—
 I could not bear it!
 What would I do!"

"What would you do, love, when home returning
 With hopes high burning,
 With wealth for you,
 If my bark, which bounded o'er foreign foam,
 Should be lost near home—
 Ah! what would you do?"—

"So thou wert spared, I'd bless the morrow,
 In want and sorrow,
 That left me you;
 And I'd welcome thee from the wasting billow,
 This heart thy pillow—
 That's what I'd do!"

Samuel Lover [1797-1868]

FAIR INES

O saw ye not fair Ines?
 She's gone into the West,
 To dazzle when the sun is down,
 And rob the world of rest:
 She took our daylight with her,
 The smiles that we love best,
 With morning blushes on her cheek,
 And pearls upon her breast.

O turn again, fair Ines,
 Before the fall of night,
 For fear the Moon should shine alone,
 And stars unrivaled bright;
 And blessed will the lover be
 That walks beneath their light,
 And breathes the love against thy cheek
 I dare not even write!

Would I had been, fair Ines,
 That gallant cavalier,
 Who rode so gaily by thy side,
 And whispered thee so near!
 Were there no bonny dames at home,
 Or no true lovers here,
 That he should cross the seas to win
 The dearest of the dear?

I saw thee, lovely Ines,
 Descend along the shore,
 With bands of noble gentlemen,
 And banners waved before;
 And gentle youth and maidens gay,
 And snowy plumes they wore:
 It would have been a beauteous dream,—
 If it had been no more!

Alas, alas! fair Ines,
 She went away with song,
 With Music waiting on her steps,
 And shoutings of the throng;
 But some were sad, and felt no mirth,
 But only Music's wrong,
 In sounds that sang Farewell, farewell,
 To her you've loved so long.

Farewell, farewell, fair Ines!
 That vessel never bore
 So fair a lady on its deck,
 Nor danced so light before,—
 Alas for pleasure on the sea,
 And sorrow on the shore!
 The smile that blessed one lover's heart
 Has broken many more!

Thomas Hood [1799-1845]

A VALEDICTION

God be with thee, my belovèd,—God be with thee!
 Else alone thou goest forth,
 Thy face unto the north,

Moor and pleasance all around thee and beneath thee
 Looking equal in one snow;
 While I, who try to reach thee,
 Vainly follow, vainly follow
 With the farewell and the hollo,
 And cannot reach thee so.
 Alas, I can but teach thee!

God be with thee, my belovèd,—God be with thee!

Can I teach thee, my belovèd,—can I teach thee?
 If I said, “Go left or right,”
 The counsel would be light,
 The wisdom, poor of all that could enrich thee;
 My right would show like left;
 My raising would depress thee,
 My choice of light would blind thee,
 Of way—would leave behind thee,
 Of end—would leave bereft.
 Alas, I can but bless thee!

May God teach thee, my belovèd,—may God teach thee!

Can I bless thee, my belovèd,—can I bless thee?
 What blessing word can I
 From mine own tears keep dry?
 What flowers grow in my field wherewith to dress thee?
 My good reverts to ill;
 My calmesses would move thee,
 My softnesses would prick thee,
 My bindings up would break thee,
 My crownings curse and kill.
 Alas, I can but love thee!
 May God bless thee, my belovèd,—may God bless thee!

Can I love thee, my belovèd,—can I love thee?
 And is *this* like love, to stand
 With no help in my hand,
 When strong as death I fain would watch above thee?
 My love-kiss can deny
 No tear that falls beneath it;

Mine oath of love can swear thee
 From no ill that comes near thee,
 And thou diest while I breathe it,
 And *I—I* can but die!

May God love thee, my belovèd,—may God love thee!

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806-1861]

FAREWELL

THOU goest; to what distant place
 Wilt thou thy sunlight carry?
 I stay with cold and clouded face:
 How long am I to tarry?
 Where'er thou goest, morn will be;
 Thou leavest night and gloom to me.

The night and gloom I can but take;
 I do not grudge thy splendor:
 Bid souls of eager men awake;
 Be kind and bright and tender.
 Give day to other worlds; for me
 It must suffice to dream of thee.

John Addington Symonds [1840-1893]

“I DO NOT LOVE THEE”

I do not love thee!—no! I do not love thee!
 And yet when thou art absent I am sad;
 And envy even the bright blue sky above thee,
 Whose quiet stars may see thee and be glad.

I do not love thee!—yet, I know not why,
 Whate'er thou dost seems still well done, to me:
 And often in my solitude I sigh
 That those I do love are not more like thee!

I do not love thee!—yet, when thou art gone,
 I hate the sound (though those who speak be near)
 Which breaks the lingering echo of the tone
 Thy voice of music leaves upon my ear.

"O Swallow, Swallow, Flying South" 943

I do not love thee!—yet thy speaking eyes,
With their deep, bright, and most expressive blue,
Between me and the midnight heaven arise,
Oftener than any eyes I ever knew.

I know I do not love thee!—yet, alas!
Others will scarcely trust my candid heart;
And oft I catch them smiling as they pass,
Because they see me gazing where thou art.

Caroline Elizabeth Sarah Norton [1808-1870]

THE PALM-TREE AND THE PINE

BENEATH an Indian palm a girl
Of other blood reposes,
Her cheek is clear and pale as pearl,
Amid that wild of roses.

Beside a northern pine a boy
Is leaning fancy-bound,
Nor listens where with noisy joy
Awaits the impatient hound.

Cool grows the sick and feverish calm,—
Relaxed the frosty twine,—
The pine-tree dreameth of the palm,
The palm-tree of the pine.

As soon shall nature interlace
Those dimly-visioned boughs,
As these young lovers face to face
Renew their early vows!

Richard Monckton Milnes [1809-1885]

"O SWALLOW, SWALLOW, FLYING SOUTH"

From "The Princess"

O SWALLOW, Swallow, flying, flying South,
Fly to her, and fall upon her gilded eaves,
And tell her, tell her what I tell to thee.

O, tell her, Swallow, thou that knowest each,
That bright and fierce and fickle is the South,
And dark and true and tender is the North.

O Swallow, Swallow, if I could follow, and light
Upon her lattice, I would pipe and trill,
And cheep and twitter twenty million loves.

O, were I thou that she might take me in,
And lay me on her bosom, and her heart
Would rock the snowy cradle till I died!

Why lingereth she to clothe her heart with love,
Delaying as the tender ash delays
To clothe herself, when all the woods are green?

O, tell her, Swallow, that thy brood is flown;
Say to her, I do but wanton in the South,
But in the North long since my nest is made.

O, tell her, brief is life but love is long,
And brief the sun of summer in the North,
And brief the moon of beauty in the South.

O Swallow, flying from the golden woods,
Fly to her, and pipe and woo her, and make her mine,
And tell her, tell her, that I follow thee.

Alfred Tennyson [1809-1892]

THE FLOWER'S NAME

HERE's the garden she walked across,
Arm in my arm, such a short while since:
Hark, now I push its wicket, the moss
Hinders the hinges and makes them wince!
She must have reached this shrub ere she turned,
As back with that murmur the wicket swung;
For she laid the poor snail, my chance foot spurned,
To feed and forget it the leaves among.

Down this side of the gravel-walk
She went while her robe's edge brushed the box:
And here she paused in her gracious talk
To point me a moth on the milk-white phlox.
Roses, ranged in valiant row,
I will never think that she passed you by!
She loves you, noble roses, I know;
But yonder see where the rock-plants lie!

This flower she stopped at, finger on lip,
Stooped over, in doubt, as settling its claim;
Till she gave me, with pride to make no slip,
Its soft meandering Spanish name:
What a name! Was it love or praise?
Speech half-asleep, or song half-awake?
I must learn Spanish, one of these days,
Only for that slow sweet name's sake.

Roses, if I live and do well,
I may bring her, one of these days,
To fix you fast with as fine a spell,
Fit you each with his Spanish phrase:
But do not detain me now; for she lingers
There, like sunshine over the ground,
And ever I see her soft white fingers
Searching after the bud she found.

Flower, you Spaniard, look that you grow not,
Stay as you are and be loved forever!
Bud, if I kiss you, 'tis that you blow not,
Mind, the shut pink mouth opens never!
For while it pouts, her fingers wrestle,
Twinkling the audacious leaves between,
Till round they turn, and down they nestle—
Is not the dear mark still to be seen?

Where I find her not, beauties vanish;
Whither I follow her, beauties flee;
Is there no method to tell her in Spanish
June's twice June since she breathed it with me?

Come, bud, show me the least of her traces,
 Treasure my lady's lightest footfall!
 —Ah, you may flout and turn up your faces,—
 Roses, you are not so fair after all!

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

TO MARGUERITE

YES: in the sea of life enisled,
 With echoing straits between us thrown,
 Doting the shoreless watery wild,
 We mortal millions live *alone*.
 The islands feel the enclasping flow,
 And then their endless bounds they know.

But when the moon their hollows lights,
 And they are swept by balms of spring,
 And in their glens, on starry nights,
 The nightingales divinely sing;
 And lovely notes, from shore to shore,
 Across the sounds and channels pour;

O then a longing like despair
 Is to their farthest caverns sent!
 For surely once, they feel, we were
 Parts of a single continent.
 Now round us spreads the watery plain—
 O might our marges meet again!

Who ordered that their longing's fire
 Should be, as soon as kindled, cooled?
 Who renders vain their deep desire?—
 A God, a God their severance ruled;
 And bade betwixt their shores to be
 The unplumbed, salt, estranging sea.

Matthew Arnold [1822-1888]

SEPARATION

STOP!—not to me, at this bitter departing,
 Speak of the sure consolations of time!
 Fresh be the wound, still-renewed be its smarting,
 So but thy image endure in its prime.

But, if the steadfast commandment of Nature
 Wills that remembrance should always decay—
 If the loved form and the deep-cherished feature
 Must, when unseen, from the soul fade away—

Me let no half-effaced memories cumber!
 Fled, fled at once, be all vestige of thee!
 Deep be the darkness and still be the slumber—
 Dead be the past and its phantoms to me!

Then, when we meet, and thy look strays towards me,
 Scanning my face and the changes wrought there:
Who, let me say, is this stranger regards me,
With the gray eyes, and the lovely brown hair?

Matthew Arnold [1822-1888]

LONGING

COME to me in my dreams, and then
 By day I shall be well again!
 For then the night will more than pay
 The hopeless longing of the day.

Come, as thou cam'st a thousand times,
 A messenger from radiant climes,
 And smile on thy new world, and be
 As kind to others as to me!

Or, as thou never cam'st in sooth,
 Come now, and let me dream it truth;
 And part my hair, and kiss my brow,
 And say: *My love! why sufferest thou?*

Come to me in my dreams, and then
 By day I shall be well again!
 For then the night will more than pay
 The hopeless longing of the day.

Matthew Arnold [1822-1888]

DIVIDED

I

AN empty sky, a world of heather,
 Purple of foxglove, yellow of broom;
 We two among them wading together,
 Shaking out honey, treading perfume.

Crowds of bees are giddy with clover,
 Crowds of grasshoppers skip at our feet,
 Crowds of larks at their matins hang over,
 Thanking the Lord for a life so sweet.

Flusheth the rise with her purple favor,
 Gloweth the cleft with her golden ring,
 'Twixt the two brown butterflies waver,
 Lightly settle, and sleepily swing.

We two walk till the purple dieth,
 And short dry grass under foot is brown,
 But one little streak at a distance lieth
 Green like a ribbon to prank the down.

II

Over the grass we stepped unto it,
 And God He knoweth how blithe we were!
 Never a voice to bid us eschew it:
 Hey the green ribbon that showed so fair!

Hey the green ribbon! we kneeled beside it,
 We parted the grasses dewy and sheen:
 Drop over drop there filtered and滑了
 A tiny bright beck that trickled between.

Tinkle, tinkle, sweetly it sung to us,
 Light was our talk as of fairy bells;—
 Fairy wedding-bells faintly rung to us
 Down in their fortunate parallels.

Hand in hand, while the sun peered over,
We lapped the grass on that youngling spring;
Swept back its rushes, smoothed its clover,
And said, "Let us follow it westering."

III

A dappled sky, a world of meadows,
Circling above us the black rooks fly
Forward, backward; lo their dark shadows
Flit on the blossoming tapestry;—

Flit on the beck; for her long grass parteth
As hair from a maid's bright eyes blown back:
And, lo, the sun like a lover darteth
His flattering smile on her wayward track.

Sing on! we sing in the glorious weather
Till one steps over the tiny strand,
So narrow, in sooth, that still together
On either brink we go hand in hand.

The beck grows wider, the hands must sever.
On either margin, our songs all done,
We move apart, while she singeth ever,
Taking the course of the stooping sun.

He prays, "Come over,"—I may not follow;
I cry, "Return,"—but he cannot come:
We speak, we laugh, but with voices hollow;
Our hands are hanging, our hearts are numb.

IV

A breathing sigh, a sigh for answer,
A little talking of outward things:
The careless beck is a merry dancer,
Keeping sweet time to the air she sings.

A little pain when the beck grows wider;
"Cross to me now; for her wavelets swell";
"I may not cross,"—and the voice beside her
Faintly reacheth, though heeded well.

No backward path; ah! no returning;
 No second crossing that ripple's flow:
 "Come to me now, for the west is burning;
 Come ere it darkens."—"Ah, no! ah, no!"

Then cries of pain, and arms outreaching,—
 The beck grows wider and swift and deep:
 Passionate words as of one beseeching:
 The loud beck drowns them: we walk, and weep.

V

A yellow moon in splendor drooping,
 A tired queen with her state oppressed,
 Low by rushes and swordgrass stooping,
 Lies she soft on the waves at rest.

The desert heavens have felt her sadness;
 Her earth will weep her some dewy tears;
 The wild beck ends her tune of gladness,
 And goeth stilly as soul that fears.

We two walk on in our grassy places
 On either marge of the moonlit flood,
 With the moon's own sadness in our faces,
 Where joy is withered, blossom and bud.

VI

A shady freshness, chafers whirring;
 A little piping of leaf-hid birds;
 A flutter of wings, a fitful stirring;
 A cloud to the eastward snowy as curds.

Bare grassy slopes, where kids are tethered,
 Round valleys like nests all ferny-lined,
 Round hills, with fluttering tree-tops feathered,
 Swell high in their freckled robes behind.

A rose-flush tender, a thrill, a quiver,
 When golden gleams to the tree-tops glide;
 A flashing edge for the milk-white river,
 The beck, a river—with still sleek tide.

Broad and white, and polished as silver,
On she goes under fruit-laden trees:
Sunk in leafage cooeth the culver,
And 'plaineth of love's disloyalties.

Glitters the dew, and shines the river,
Up comes the lily and dries her bell;
But two are walking apart forever,
And wave their hands for a mute farewell.

VII

A braver swell, a swifter sliding;
The river hasteth, her banks recede.
Wing-like sails on her bosom gliding
Bear down the lily, and drown the reed.

Stately prows are rising and bowing
(Shouts of mariners winnow the air),
And level sands for banks endowing
The tiny green ribbon that showed so fair.

While, O my heart! as white sails shiver,
And clouds are passing, and banks stretch wide,
How hard to follow, with lips that quiver,
That moving speck on the far-off side.

Farther, farther; I see it, know it—
My eyes brim over, it melts away:
Only my heart to my heart shall show it
As I walk desolate day by day.

VIII

And yet I know past all doubting, truly,—
A knowledge greater than grief can dim,—
I know, as he loved, he will love me duly,—
Yea, better, e'en better than I love him.

And as I walk by the vast calm river,
The awful river so dread to see,
I say, "Thy breadth and thy depth forever
Are bridged by his thoughts that cross to me."

Jean Ingelow [1820-1897]

MY PLAYMATE

THE pines were dark on Ramoth hill,
Their song was soft and low;
The blossoms in the sweet May wind
Were falling like the snow.

The blossoms drifted at our feet,
The orchard birds sang clear;
The sweetest and the saddest day
It seemed of all the year.

For, more to me than birds or flowers,
My playmate left her home,
And took with her the laughing spring,
The music and the bloom.

She kissed the lips of kith and kin,
She laid her hand in mine:
What more could ask the bashful boy
Who fed her father's kine?

She left us in the bloom of May:
The constant years told o'er
Their seasons with as sweet May morns,
But she came back no more.

I walk, with noiseless feet, the round
Of uneventful years;
Still o'er and o'er I sow the spring
And reap the autumn ears.

She lives where all the golden year
Her summer roses blow;
The dusky children of the sun
Before her come and go.

There haply with her jeweled hands
She smooths her silken gown,—
No more the homespun lap wherein
I shook the walnuts down.

The wild grapes wait us by the brook,
The brown nuts on the hill,
And still the May-day flowers make sweet
The woods of Follymill.

The lilies blossom in the pond,
The bird builds in the tree,
The dark pines sing on Ramoth hill
The slow song of the sea.

I wonder if she thinks of them,
And how the old time seems,—
If ever the pines of Ramoth wood
Are sounding in her dreams.

I see her face, I hear her voice:
Does she remember mine?
And what to her is now the boy
Who fed her father's kine?

What cares she that the orioles build
For other eyes than ours,—
That other laps with nuts are filled,
And other hands with flowers?

O playmate in the golden time!
Our mossy seat is green,
Its fringing violets blossom yet,
The old trees o'er it lean.

The winds so sweet with birch and fern
A sweeter memory blow;
And there in spring the veeries sing
The song of long ago.

And still the pines of Ramoth wood
Are moaning like the sea,—
The moaning of the sea of change
Between myself and thee!

John Greenleaf Whittier [1807-1892]

A FAREWELL

WITH all my will, but much against my heart,
 We two now part.
My Very Dear,
 Our solace is, the sad road lies so clear.
 It needs no art,
 With faint, averted feet
 And many a tear,
 In our opposèd paths to persevere.
 Go thou to East, I West.
 We will not say
 There's any hope, it is so far away.
 But, O, my Best,
 When the one darling of our widowhead,
 The nursling Grief
 Is dead,
 And no dews blur our eyes
 To see the peach-bloom come in evening skies,
 Perchance we may,
 Where now this night is day,
 And even through faith of still averted feet,
 Making full circle of our banishment,
 Amazèd meet;
 The bitter journey to the bourne so sweet
 Seasoning the termless feast of our content
 With tears of recognition never dry.

Coventry Patmore [1823-1896]

DEPARTURE

IT was not like your great and gracious ways!
 Do you, that have naught other to lament,
 Never, my Love, repent
 Of how, that July afternoon,
 You went,
 With sudden, unintelligible phrase,
 And frightened eye,
 Upon your journey of so many days

Without a single kiss, or a good-bye?
I knew, indeed, that you were parting soon;
And so we sate, within the low sun's rays,
You whispering to me, for your voice was weak,
Your harrowing praise.
Well, it was well
To hear you such things speak,
And I could tell
What made your eyes a glowing gloom of love,
As a warm South-wind sombers a March grove.

And it was like your great and gracious ways
To turn your talk on daily things, my Dear,
Lifting the luminous, pathetic lash
To let the laughter flash,
Whilst I drew near,
Because you spoke so low that I could scarcely hear.
But all at once to leave me at the last,
More at the wonder than the loss aghast,
With huddled, unintelligible phrase,
And frightened eye,
And go your journey of all days
With not one kiss, or a good-bye,
And the only loveless look the look with which you passed:
'Twas all unlike your great and gracious ways.

Coventry Patmore [1823-1896]

ABSENT, YET PRESENT

As the flight of a river
That flows to the sea,
My soul rushes ever
In tumult to thee.

A twofold existence
I am where thou art;
My heart in the distance
Beats close to thy heart.

Look up, I am near thee,
 I gaze on thy face;
 I see thee, I hear thee,
 I feel thine embrace.

As a magnet's control on
 To steel it draws to it,
 Is the charm of thy soul on
 The thoughts that pursue it.

And absence but brightens
 The eyes that I miss,
 And custom but heightens
 The spell of thy kiss.

It is not from duty,
 Though that may be owed,—
 It is not from beauty,
 Though that be bestowed;

But all that I care for,
 And all that I know,
 Is that, without wherefore,
 I worship thee so.

Through granite it breaketh
 A tree to the ray,
 As a dreamer forsaketh
 The grief of the day,

My soul in its fever
 Escapes unto thee;
 O dream to the griever.
 O light to the tree!

A twofold existence
 I am where thou art;
 Hark, hear in the distance
 The beat of my heart!

Edward Robert Bulwer Lytton [1831-1891]

SONG

From "The Earthly Paradise"

FAIR is the night, and fair the day,
Now April is forgot of May,
Now into June May falls away:
Fair day! fair night! O give me back
The tide that all fair things did lack
Except my Love, except my Sweet!

Blow back, O wind! thou art not kind,
Though thou art sweet: thou hast no mind
Her hair about my Sweet to bind.
O flowery sward! though thou art bright,
I praise thee not for thy delight,—
Thou hast not kissed her silver feet.

Thou know'st her not, O rustling tree!
What dost thou then to shadow me,
Whose shade her breast did never see?
O flowers! in vain ye bow adown:
Ye have not felt her odorous gown
Brush past your heads my lips to meet.

Flow on, great river! thou mayst deem
That far away, a summer stream,
Thou saw'st her limbs amidst the gleam,
And kissed her foot, and kissed her knee:
Yet get thee swift unto the sea!
With naught of true thou wilt me greet.

And Thou that men call by my name!
O helpless One! hast thou no shame
That thou must even look the same
As while agone, as while agone
When Thou and She were left alone,
And hands and lips and tears did meet?

Grow weak and pine, lie down to die,
O body! in thy misery,

Because short time and sweet goes by.
 O foolish heart! how weak thou art:
 Break, break, because thou needs must part
 From thine own Love, from thine own Sweet!

William Morris [1834-1896]

AT PARTING

FOR a day and a night Love sang to us, played with us,
 Folded us round from the dark and the light;
 And our hearts were fulfilled of the music he made with us,
 Made with our hearts and our lips while he stayed with us,
 Stayed in mid passage his pinions from flight
 For a day and a night.

From his foes that kept watch with his wings had he hidden
 us,
 Covered us close from the eyes that would smite,
 From the feet that had tracked and the tongues that had
 hidden us
 Sheltering in shade of the myrtles forbidden us
 Spirit and flesh growing one with delight
 For a day and a night.

But his wings will not rest and his feet will not stay for us:
 Morning is here in the joy of its might;
 With his breath has he sweetened a night and a day for us:
 Now let him pass, and the myrtles make way for us;
 Love can but last in us here at his height
 For a day and a night.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837-1909]

"IF SHE BUT KNEW"

If she but knew that I am weeping
 Still for her sake,
 That love and sorrow grow with keeping
 Till they must break,
 My heart that breaking will adore her,
 Be hers and die;
 If she might hear me once implore her,
 Would she not sigh?

If she but knew that it would save me
 Her voice to hear,
 Saying she pitied me, forgave me,
 Must she forbear?
 If she were told that I was dying,
 Would she be dumb?
 Could she content herself with sighing?
 Would she not come?

Arthur O'Shaughnessy [1844-1881]

KATHLEEN MAVOURNEEN

KATHLEEN MAVOURNEEN! the gray dawn is breaking,
 The horn of the hunter is heard on the hill;
 The lark from her light wing the bright dew is shaking,—
 Kathleen Mavourneen! what, slumbering still?
 Oh, hast thou forgotten how soon we must sever?
 Oh! hast thou forgotten this day we must part?
 It may be for years, and it may be forever!
 Oh, why art thou silent, thou voice of my heart?
 Oh! why art thou silent, Kathleen Mavourneen?

Kathleen Mavourneen, awake from thy slumbers!
 The blue mountains glow in the sun's golden light;
 Ah, where is the spell that once hung on my numbers?
 Arise in thy beauty, thou star of my night!
 Mavourneen, Mavourneen, my sad tears are falling,
 To think that from Erin and thee I must part!
 It may be for years, and it may be forever!
 Then why art thou silent, thou voice of my heart?
 Then why art thou silent, Kathleen Mavourneen?

Louisa Macartney Crawford [18 -

ROBIN ADAIR

WHAT'S this dull town to me?
 Robin's not near,—
 He whom I wished to see,
 Wished for to hear;

Where's all the joy and mirth
Made life a heaven on earth?
O, they're all fled with thee,
Robin Adair!

What made the assembly shine?
Robin Adair:
What made the ball so fine?
Robin was there:
What, when the play was o'er,
What made my heart so sore?
O, it was parting with
Robin Adair!

But now thou art far from me,
Robin Adair;
But now I never see
Robin Adair;
Yet him I loved so well
Still in my heart shall dwell;
O, I can ne'er forget
Robin Adair!

Welcome on shore again,
Robin Adair!
Welcome once more again,
Robin Adair!
I feel thy trembling hand;
Tears in thy eyelids stand,
To greet thy native land,
Robin Adair!

Long I ne'er saw thee, love,
Robin Adair;
Still I prayed for thee, love,
Robin Adair;
When thou wert far at sea,
Many made love to me,
But still I thought on thee,
Robin Adair!

Come to my heart again,
 Robin Adair;
 Never to part again,
 Robin Adair;
 And if thou still art true,
 I will be constant too,
 And will wed none but you,
 Robin Adair!

Caroline Keppel [1735-?]

“IF YOU WERE HERE”

A SONG IN WINTER

O LOVE, if you were here
 This dreary, weary day,—
 If your lips, warm and dear,
 Found some sweet word to say,—
 Then hardly would seem drear
 These skies of wintry gray.

But you are far away,—
 How far from me, my dear!
 What cheer can warm the day?
 My heart is chill with fear,
 Pierced through with swift dismay;
 A thought has turned Life sere:

If you, from far away,
 Should come not back, my dear;
 If I no more might lay
 My hand on yours, nor hear
 That voice, now sad, now gay,
 Caress my listening ear;

If you, from far away,
 Should come no more, my dear,—
 Then with what dire dismay
 Year joined to hostile year
 Would frown, if I should stay
 Where memories mock and jeer!

But I would come away
 To dwell with you, my dear;
 Through unknown worlds to stray,—
 Or sleep; nor hope, nor fear,
 Nor dream beneath the clay
 Of all our days that were.

Philip Bourke Marston [1850-1887]

“COME TO ME, DEAREST”

COME to me, dearest, I'm lonely without thee;
 Daytime and night-time, I'm thinking about thee;
 Night-time and daytime, in dreams I behold thee;
 Unwelcome the waking which ceases to fold thee.
 Come to me, darling, my sorrows to lighten,
 Come in thy beauty to bless and to brighten;
 Come in thy womanhood, meekly and lowly,
 Come in thy lovingness, queenly and holy.

Swallows will flit round the desolate ruin,
 Telling of spring and its joyous renewing;
 And thoughts of thy love and its manifold treasure,
 Are circling my heart with a promise of pleasure.
 O Spring of my spirit, O May of my bosom,
 Shine out on my soul, till it bourgeon and blossom;
 The waste of my life has a rose-root within it,
 And thy fondness alone to the sunshine can win it.

Figure that moves like a song through the even;
 Features lit up by a reflex of heaven;
 Eyes like the skies of poor Erin, our mother,
 Where shadow and sunshine are chasing each other;
 Smiles coming seldom, but childlike and simple,
 Planting in each rosy cheek a sweet dimple;—
 O, thanks to the Saviour, that even thy seeming
 Is left to the exile to brighten his dreaming.

You have been glad when you knew I was gladdened;
 Dear, are you sad now to hear I am saddened?

Our hearts ever answer in tune and in time, love,
As octave to octave, and rhyme unto rhyme, love:
I cannot weep but your tears will be flowing,
You cannot smile but my cheek will be glowing;
I would not die without you at my side, love,
You will not linger when I shall have died, love.

Come to me, dear, ere I die of my sorrow,
Rise on my gloom like the sun of to-morrow;
Strong, swift, and fond are the words which I speak, love,
With a song on your lip and a smile on your cheek, love.
Come, for my heart in your absence is weary,—
Haste, for my spirit is sickened and dreary,—
Come to my arms which alone should caress thee,
Come to the heart which is throbbing to press thee!

Joseph Brenan [1829-1857]

SONG

'Tis said that absence conquers love!

 But, oh! believe it not;
I've tried, alas! its power to prove,
 But thou art not forgot.
Lady, though fate has bid us part,
 Yet still thou art as dear,
As fixed in this devoted heart,
 As when I clasped thee here.

I plunge into the busy crowd,
 And smile to hear thy name;
And yet, as if I thought aloud,
 They know me still the same;
And when the wine-cup passes round,
 I toast some other fair,—
But when I ask my heart the sound,
 Thy name is echoed there.

And when some other name I learn,
 And try to whisper love,
Still will my heart to thee return
 Like the returning dove.

In vain! I never can forget,
 And would not be forgot;
 For I must bear the same regret,
 Whate'er may be my lot.

E'en as the wounded bird will seek
 Its favorite bower to die,
 So, lady! I would hear thee speak,
 And yield my parting sigh.
 'Tis said that absence conquers love!
 But, oh! believe it not;
 I've tried, alas! its power to prove,
 But thou art not forgot.

Frederick William Thomas [1811-1864]

PARTING

Too fair, I may not call thee mine:
 Too dear, I may not see
 Those eyes with bridal beacons shine;
 Yet, Darling, keep for me—
 Empty and hushed, and safe apart,—
 One little corner of thy heart.

Thou wilt be happy, dear! and bless
 Thee: happy mayst thou be.
 I would not make thy pleasure less;
 Yet, Darling, keep for me—
 My life to light, my lot to leaven,—
 One little corner of thy Heaven.

Good-by, dear heart! I go to dwell
 A weary way from thee;
 Our first kiss is our last farewell;
 Yet, Darling, keep for me—
 Who wander outside in the night,—
 One little corner of thy light.

Gerald Massey [1828-1907]

THE PARTING HOUR

Not yet, dear love, not yet: the sun is high;
 You said last night, "At sunset I will go."
Come to the garden, where when blossoms die
 No word is spoken; it is better so:
 Ah! bitter word "Farewell."

Hark! how the birds sing sunny songs of spring!
 Soon they will build, and work will silence them;
So we grow less light-hearted as years bring
 Life's grave responsibilities—and then
 The bitter word "Farewell."

The violets fret to fragrance 'neath your feet,
 Heaven's gold sunlight dreams aslant your hair:
No flower for me! your mouth is far more sweet.
 O, let my lips forget, while lingering there,
 Love's bitter word "Farewell."

Sunset already! have we sat so long?
 The parting hour, and so much left unsaid!
The garden has grown silent—void of song,
 Our sorrow shakes us with a sudden dread!
 Ah! bitter word "Farewell."

Olive Custance [18 -

A SONG OF AUTUMN

ALL through the golden weather
 Until the autumn fell,
Our lives went by together
 So wildly and so well.

But autumn's wind uncloses
 The heart of all your flowers;
I think, as with the roses,
 So hath it been with ours.

Like some divided river
 Your ways and mine will be,
 To drift apart for ever,
 For ever till the sea.

And yet for one word spoken,
 One whisper of regret,
 The dream had not been broken,
 And love were with us yet.

Rennell Rodd [1858-]

THE GIRL I LEFT BEHIND ME

THE dames of France are fond and free,
 And Flemish lips are willing,
 And soft the maids of Italy,
 And Spanish eyes are thrilling;
 Still, though I bask beneath their smile,
 Their charms fail to bind me,
 And my heart falls back to Erin's Isle,
 To the girl I left behind me.

For she's as fair as Shannon's side,
 And purer than its water,
 But she refused to be my bride
 Though many a year I sought her;
 Yet, since to France I sailed away,
 Her letters oft remind me
 That I promised never to gainsay
 The girl I left behind me.

She says, "My own dear love, come home,
 My friends are rich and many,
 Or else abroad with you I'll roam,
 A soldier stout as any;
 If you'll not come, nor let me go,
 I'll think you have resigned me,"—
 My heart nigh broke when I answered "No,"
 To the girl I left behind me.

For never shall my true love brave
A life of war and toiling,
And never as a skulking slave
I'll tread my native soil on;
But, were it free or to be freed,
The battle's close would find me
To Ireland bound, nor message need
From the girl I left behind me.

Unknown

“WHEN WE ARE PARTED”

WHEN we are parted let me lie
In some far corner of thy heart,
Silent, and from the world apart,
Like a forgotten melody:
Forgotten of the world beside,
Cherished by one, and one alone,
For some loved memory of its own;
So let me in thy heart abide
When we are parted.

When we are parted, keep for me
The sacred stillness of the night;
That hour, sweet Love, is mine by right;
Let others claim the day of thee!
The cold world sleeping at our feet,
My spirit shall discourse with thine;—
When stars upon thy pillow shine,
At thy heart's door I stand and beat,
Though we are parted.

Hamilton Aide [1826-1906]

REMEMBER OR FORGET

I SAT beside the streamlet,
I watched the water flow,
As we together watched it
One little year ago:

The soft rain pattered on the leaves,
 The April grass was wet.
 Ah! folly to remember;
 'Tis wiser to forget.

The nightingales made vocal
 June's palace paved with gold;
 I watched the rose you gave me
 Its warm red heart unfold;
 But breath of rose and bird's song
 Were fraught with wild regret.
 'Tis madness to remember;
 'Twere wisdom to forget.

I stood among the gold corn,
 Alas! no more, I knew,
 To gather gleaner's measure
 Of the love that fell from you.
 For me, no gracious harvest—
 Would God we ne'er had met!
 'Tis hard, Love, to remember,
 But 'tis harder to forget.

The streamlet now is frozen,
 The nightingales are fled,
 The cornfields are deserted,
 And every rose is dead.
 I sit beside my lonely fire,
 And pray for wisdom yet:
 For calmness to remember,
 Or courage to forget.

Hamilton Aide [1826-1906]

NANCY DAWSON

NANCY DAWSON, Nancy Dawson,
 Not so very long ago
 Some one wronged you from sheer love, dear;
 Little thinking it would crush, dear,
 All I cherished in you so.

But now, what's the odds, my Nancy?
 Where's the guinea, there's the fancy.
 Are you Nancy, that old Nancy?
 Nancy Dawson.

Nancy Dawson, Nancy Dawson,
 I forget you, what you were;
 Till I feel the sad hours creep, dear,
 O'er my heart; as o'er my cheek, dear,
 Once of old, that old, old hair:
 And then, unawares, my Nancy,
 I remember, and I fancy
 You are Nancy, that old Nancy;
 Nancy Dawson.

Herbert P. Horne [18 -

MY LITTLE LOVE

God keep you safe, my little love,
 All through the night.
 Rest close in His encircling arms
 Until the light.
 My heart is with you as I kneel to pray,
 "Good night! God keep you in His care alway."

Thick shadows creep like silent ghosts
 About my bed.
 I lose myself in tender dreams
 While overhead
 The moon comes stealing through the window bars.
 A silver sickle gleaming 'mid the stars.

For I, though I am far away,
 Feel safe and strong,
 To trust you thus, dear love, and yet
 The night is long.
 I say with sobbing breath the old fond prayer,
 "Good night! Sweet dreams! God keep you everywhere!"

Charles B. Hawley [1858-

FOR EVER

THRICE with her lips she touched my lips,
 Thrice with her hand my hand,
 And three times thrice looked towards the sea,
 But never to the land:
 Then, "Sweet," she said, "no more delay,
 For Heaven forbids a longer stay."

I, with my passion in my heart,
 Could find no words to waste;
 But striving often to depart,
 I strained her to my breast:
 Her wet tears washed my weary cheek;
 I could have died, but could not speak.

The anchor swings, the sheet flies loose
 And, bending to the breeze,
 The tall ship, never to return,
 Flies through the foaming seas:
 Cheerily ho! the sailors cry;—
 My sweet love lessening to my eye.

O Love, turn towards the land thy sight!
 No more peruse the sea;
 Our God, who severs thus our hearts,
 Shall surely care for thee:
 For me let waste-wide ocean swing,
 I too lie safe beneath His wing.

William Caldwell Roscoe [1823-1859]

AUF WIEDERSEHEN

THE little gate was reached at last,
 Half hid in lilacs down the lane;
 She pushed it wide, and, as she passed,
 A wistful look she backward cast,
 And said,—“*Auf wiedersehen!*”

With hand on latch, a vision white
 Lingered reluctant, and again
 Half doubting if she did aright,
 Soft as the dews that fell that night,
 She said,—“*Auf wiedersehen!*”

The lamp’s clear gleam flits up the stair;
 I linger in delicious pain;
 Ah, in that chamber, whose rich air
 To breathe in thought I scarcely dare,
 Thinks she,—“*Auf wiedersehen?*” . . .

’Tis thirteen years; once more I press
 The turf that silences the lane;
 I hear the rustle of her dress,
 I smell the lilacs, and—ah, yes,
 I hear,—“*Auf wiedersehen!*”

Sweet piece of bashful maiden art!
 The English words had seemed too faint,
 But these—they drew us heart to heart,
 Yet held us tenderly apart;
 She said,—“*Auf wiedersehen!*”

James Russell Lowell [1819-1891]

“FOREVER AND A DAY”

I LITTLE know or care
 If the blackbird on the bough
 Is filling all the air
 With his soft crescendo now;
 For she is gone away,
 And when she went she took
 The springtime in her look,
 The peachblow on her cheek,
 The laughter from the brook,
 The blue from out the May—
 And what she calls a week
 Is forever and a day!

It's little that I mind
 How the blossoms, pink or white,
 At every touch of wind
 Fall a-trembling with delight;
 For in the leafy lane,
 Beneath the garden-boughs,
 And through the silent house
 One thing alone I seek.
 Until she come again
 The May is not the May,
 And what she calls a week
 Is forever and a day!

Thomas Bailey Aldrich [1837-1907]

OLD GARDENS

THE white rose tree that spent its musk
 For lovers' sweeter praise,
 The stately walks we sought at dusk,
 Have missed thee many days.

Again, with once-familiar feet,
 I tread the old parterre—
 But, ah, its bloom is now less sweet
 Than when thy face was there.

I hear the birds of evening call;
 I take the wild perfume;
 I pluck a rose—to let it fall
 And perish in the gloom.

Arthur Upson [1877-1908]

DONALD

O WHITE, white, light moon, that sailest in the sky,
 Look down upon the whirling world, for thou art up so high,
 And tell me where my Donald is, who sailed across the sea,
 And make a path of silver light to lead him back to me.

O white, white, bright moon, thy cheek is coldly fair,
A little cloud beside thee seems thy wildly floating hair;
And if thou wouldst not have me grow all white and cold
like thee,
Go, make a mighty tide to draw my Donald back to me.

O light, white, bright moon, that dost so fondly shine,
There is not a lily in the world but hides its face from thine;
I too shall go and hide my face close in the dust from thee,
Unless with light and tide thou bring my Donald back to me.

Henry Abbey [1842]

WE TWAIN

OH, earth and Heaven are far apart!
But what if they were one,
And neither you nor I, Sweetheart,
Had anyway misdone?
Then we like singing rivers fleet
That cannot choose but flow,
Among the flowers should meet and greet,
Should meet and mingle so,
Sweetheart,
That would be sweet, I know.

No need to swerve and drift apart,
Or any bliss resign!
Then I should all be yours, Sweetheart,
And you would all be mine.
But ah, to rush, defiled and brown,
From thaw of smirched snow,
To spoil the corn, beat down and drown
The rath, red lilies low,—
Sweetheart,
I do not want you so!

For you and I are far apart,
And never may we meet,
Till you are glad and grand, Sweetheart,
Till I am fair and sweet:

Till morning light has kissed us white
 As highest Alpine snow.
 Till both are brave and bright of sight,
 Go wander high or low,
 Sweetheart,
 For God will have it so.

Oh, Heaven and earth are far apart!
 If you are bond or free,
 And if you climb or crawl, Sweetheart,
 Can no way hinder me.
 But see you come in lordly state,
 With mountain winds a-glow,
 When I by dazzling gate shall wait
 To meet and love you so,
 Sweetheart,—
 That will be Heaven, I know.

Amanda T. Jones [1835]

WITH THEE

If I could know that after all
 These heavy bonds have ceased to thrall,
 We, whom in life the fates divide,
 Should sweetly slumber side by side—
 That one green spray would drop its dew
 Softly alike above us two,
 All would be well, for I should be
 At last, dear loving heart, with thee!

How sweet to know this dust of ours,
 Mingling, will feed the self-same flowers,—
 The scent of leaves, the song-bird's tone,
 At once across our rest be blown,—
 One breadth of sun, one sheet of rain
 Make green the grass above us twain!
 Ah, sweet and strange, for I should be,
 At last, dear tender heart, with thee!

But half the earth may intervene
 Thy place of rest and mine between,—

And leagues of land and wastes of waves
 May stretch and toss between our graves—
 Thy bed with summer light be warm
 While snow-drifts heap, in wind and storm,
 My pillow, whose one thorn will be,
 Beloved, that I am not with thee!

But if there be a blissful sphere
 Where homesick souls, divided here,
 And wandering wide in useless quest,
 Shall find their longed-for heaven of rest,—
 If in that higher, happier birth
 We meet the joy we missed on earth,
 All will be well, for I shall be,
 At last, dear loving heart, with thee!

Elizabeth Akers [1832-1911]

SONG

SHE's somewhere in the sunlight strong,
 Her tears are in the falling rain,
 She calls me in the wind's soft song,
 And with the flowers she comes again.

Yon bird is but her messenger,
 The moon is but her silver car;
 Yea! sun and moon are sent by her,
 And every wistful waiting star.

Richard Le Gallienne [1866-]

GOSSIP

WE knew them friends; he held her glance,
 Her hidden thought could understand;
 Yet he's in England, she's in France,
 For fear lest he might touch her hand.

And two who loved with soul and mind
 Said calm goodby, with civil lies,
 Lest they the common road might find,
 And learn to love with lips and eyes.

Helen Huntington [18 -

**THE LOVER THINKS OF HIS LADY IN THE
NORTH**

Now many are the stately ships that northward steam away,
And gray sails northward blow black hulls, and many more
are they;
And myriads of viking gulls flap to the northern seas:
But Oh my thoughts that go to you are more than all of
these!

The winds blow to the northward like a million eager wings,
The driven sea a million white-capped waves to northward
flings:
I send you thoughts more many than the waves that fleck
the sea,
More eager than tempestuous winds, O Love long leagues
from me!

O Love, long leagues from me, I would I trod the drenched deck
Of some ship speeding to the North and staunch against all
wreck,
I would I were a sea-gull strong of wing and void of fear:
Unfaltering and fleet I'd fly the long way to my Dear!

O if I were the sea, upon your northern land I'd beat
Until my waves flowed over all, and kissed your wandering
feet;
And if I were the winds, I'd waft you perfumes from the
South,
And give my pleadings to your ears, my kisses to your mouth.

Though many ships are sailing, never one will carry me,
I may not hurry northward with the gulls, the winds, the sea;
But fervid thoughts they say can flash across long leagues of
blue—
Ah, so my love and longing must be known, Dear Heart, to
you!

CHANSON DE ROSEMONDE

THE dawn is lonely for the sun,
 And chill and drear;
 The one lone star is pale and wan
 As one in fear.
 But when day strides across the hills,
 The warm blood rushes through
 The bared soft bosom of the blue
 And all the glad east thrills.

Oh, come, my King! The hounds of joy
 Are waiting for thy horn
 To chase the doe of heart's desire
 Across the heights of morn.
 Oh, come, my Sun, and let me know
 The rapture of the day!
 Oh, come, my love! Oh, come, my love!
 Thou art so long away!

Richard Hovey [1864-1900]

AD DOMNULAM SUAM

LITTLE lady of my heart!
 Just a little longer,
 Love me: we will pass and part,
 Ere this love grow stronger.

I have loved thee, Child! too well,
 To do aught but leave thee:
 Nay! my lips should never tell
 Any tale to grieve thee.

Little lady of my heart!
 Just a little longer
 I may love thee: we will part
 Ere my love grow stronger.

Soon thou leavest fairy-land;
 Darker grow thy tresses:
 Soon no more of hand in hand;
 Soon no more caresses!

Little lady of my heart!
 Just a little longer
 Be a child; then we will part,
 Ere this love grow stronger.

Ernest Dowson [1867-1900]

MARIAN DRURY

MARIAN DRURY, Marian Drury,
 How are the marshes full of the sea!
 Acadie dreams of your coming home
 All year through, and her heart gets free,—

Free on the trail of the wind to travel,
 Search and course with the roving tide,
 All year long where his hands unravel
 Blossom and berry the marshes hide.

Marian Drury, Marian Drury,
 How are the marshes full of the surge!
 April over the Norland now
 Walks in the quiet from verge to verge.

Burying, brimming, the building billows
 Fret the long dikes with uneasy foam.
 Drenched with gold weather, the idling willows
 Kiss you a hand from the Norland home.

Marian Drury, Marian Drury,
 How are the marshes full of the sun!
 Blomidon waits for your coming home,
 All day long where the white wings run.

All spring through they falter and follow,
 Wander, and beckon the roving tide,
 Wheel and float with the veering swallow,
 Lift you a voice from the blue hillside.

Marian Drury, Marian Drury,
 How are the marshes full of the rain!
 April over the Norland now
 Bugles for rapture, and rouses pain,—

Halts before the forsaken dwelling,
 Where in the twilight, too spent to roam,
 Love, whom the fingers of death are quelling,
 Cries you a cheer from the Norland home.

Marian Drury, Marian Drury,
 How are the marshes filled with you!
 Grand Pré dreams of your coming home,—
 Dreams while the rainbirds all night through,

Far in the uplands calling to win you,
 Tease the brown dusk on the marshes wide;
 And never the burning heart within you
 Stirs in your sleep by the roving tide.

Bliss Carman [1861—

LOVE'S ROSARY

All day I tell my rosary
 For now my love's away:
 To-morrow he shall come to me
 About the break of day;
 A rosary of twenty hours,
 And then a rose of May;
 A rosary of fettered flowers,
 And then a holy-day.

All day I tell my rosary,
 My rosary of hours:
 And here's a flower of memory,
 And here's a hope of flowers,
 And here's an hour that yearns with pain
 For old forgotten years,
 An hour of loss, an hour of gain,
 And then a shower of tears.

All day I tell my rosary,
 Because my love's away;
 And never a whisper comes to me,
 And never a word to say;

But, if it's parting more endears,
 God bring him back, I pray;
Or my heart will break in the darkness
 Before the break of day.

All day I tell my rosary,
 My rosary of hours,
Until an hour shall bring to me
 The hope of all the flowers . . .
I tell my rosary of hours,
 For O, my love's away;
And—a dream may bring him back to me
 About the break of day.

Alfred Noyes' [1880-

THE TRAGEDY OF LOVE

SONG

My silks and fine array,
 My smiles and languished air,
By Love are driven away;
 And mournful lean Despair
Brings me yew to deck my grave:
 Such end true lovers have.

His face is fair as heaven
 When springing buds unfold:
O why to him was't given,
 Whose heart is wintry cold?
His breast is Love's all-worshipped tomb,
 Where all Love's pilgrims come.

Bring me an ax and spade,
 Bring me a winding-sheet;
When I my grave have made,
 Let winds and tempests beat:
Then down I'll lie, as cold as clay:
 True love doth pass away!

William Blake [1757-1827]

THE FLIGHT OF LOVE

WHEN the lamp is shattered
The light in the dust lies dead—
When the cloud is scattered,
The rainbow's glory is shed.
When the lute is broken,
Sweet tones are remembered not;
When the lips have spoken,
Loved accents are soon forgot.

As music and splendor
 Survive not the lamp and the lute,
 The heart's echoes render
 No song when the spirit is mute—
 No song but sad dirges,
 Like the wind through a ruined cell,
 Or the mournful surges
 That ring the dead seaman's knell.

When hearts have once mingled,
 Love first leaves the well-built nest;
 The weak one is singled
 To endure what it once possessed.
 O Love! who bewailest
 The frailty of all things here,
 Why choose you the frailest
 For your cradle, your home, and your bier?

Its passions will rock thee
 As the storms rock the ravens on high;
 Bright reason will mock thee,
 Like the sun from a wintry sky.
 From thy nest every rafter
 Will rot, and thine eagle home
 Leave thee naked to laughter,
 When leaves fall and cold winds come.

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792-1822]

"FAREWELL! IF EVER FONDEST PRAYER"

FAREWELL! if ever fondest prayer
 For other's weal availed on high,
 Mine will not all be lost in air,
 But waft thy name beyond the sky.
 'Twere vain to speak, to weep, to sigh:
 Oh! more than tears of blood can tell,
 When wrung from guilt's expiring eye,
 Are in that word—Farewell!—Farewell!

These lips are mute, these eyes are dry:
But in my breast and in my brain
Awake the pangs that pass not by,
The thought that ne'er shall sleep again.
My soul nor deigns nor dares complain,
Though grief and passion there rebel:
I only know we loved in vain—
I only feel—Farewell!—Farewell!

George Gordon Byron [1788-1824]

PORPHYRIA'S LOVER

THE rain set early in to-night,
The sullen wind was soon awake,
It tore the elm-tops down for spite,
And did its worst to vex the lake:
I listened with heart fit to break.
When glided in Porphyria; straight
She shut the cold out and the storm,
And kneeled and made the cheerless grate
Blaze up, and all the cottage warm;
Which done, she rose, and from her form
Withdrew the dripping cloak and shawl,
And laid her soiled gloves by, untied
Her hat and let the damp hair fall,
And, last, she sat down by my side
And called me. When no voice replied,
She put my arm about her waist,
And made her smooth white shoulder bare,
And all her yellow hair displaced,
And, stooping, made my cheek lie there,
And spread, o'er all, her yellow hair,
Murmuring how she loved me—she
Too weak, for all her heart's endeavor,
To set its struggling passion free
From pride, and vainer ties dissever,
And give herself to me for ever.
But passion sometimes would prevail,
Nor could to-night's gay feast restrain
A sudden thought of one so pale

For love of her, and all in vain:
 So, she was come through wind and rain.
 Be sure I looked up at her eyes
 Happy and proud; at last I knew
 Porphyria worshipped me; surprise
 Made my heart swell, and still it grew
 While I debated what to do.
 That moment she was mine, mine, fair,
 Perfectly pure and good: I found
 A thing to do, and all her hair
 In one long yellow string I wound
 Three times her little throat around,
 And strangled her. No pain felt she;
 I am quite sure she felt no pain.
 As a shut bud that holds a bee,
 I warily oped her lids: again
 Laughed the blue eyes without a stain.
 And I untightened next the tress
 About her neck; her cheek once more
 Blushed bright beneath my burning kiss:
 I propped her head up as before,
 Only, this time my shoulder bore
 Her head, which droops upon it still:
 The smiling rosy little head,
 So glad it has its utmost will,
 That all it scorned at once is fled,
 And I, its love, am gained instead!
 Porphyria's love: she guessed not how
 Her darling one wish would be heard.
 And thus we sit together now,
 And all night long we have not stirred,
 And yet God has not said a word!

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

MODERN BEAUTY

I AM the torch, she saith, and what to me
 If the moth die of me? I am the flame
 Of Beauty, and I burn that all may see
 Beauty, and I have neither joy nor shame,

But live with that clear light of perfect fire
Which is to men the death of their desire.

I am Yseult and Helen, I have seen
Troy burn, and the most loving knight lies dead.
The world has been my mirror, time has been
My breath upon the glass; and men have said,
Age after age, in rapture and despair,
Love's poor few words, before my image there.

I live, and am immortal; in my eyes
The sorrow of the world, and on my lips
The joy of life, mingle to make me wise;
Yet now the day is darkened with eclipse:
Who is there lives for beauty? Still am I
The torch, but where's the moth that still dares die?

Arthur Symons [1865-]

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
Alone and palely loitering?
The sedge has withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

I see a lily on thy brow
With anguish moist and fever-dew,
And on thy cheeks a fading rose
Fast withereth too.

I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful—a fairy's child,
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

I made a garland for her head,
 And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
 She looked at me as she did love,
 And made sweet moan.

I set her on my pacing steed
 And nothing else saw all day long,
 For sidelong would she bend, and sing
 A fairy's song.

She found me roots of relish sweet,
 And honey wild and manna-dew,
 And sure in language strange she said,
 "I love thee true."

She took me to her elfin grot,
 And there she wept and sighed full sore;
 And there I shut her wild, wild eyes
 With kisses four.

And there she lullèd me asleep,
 And there I dreamed—Ah! woe betide!
 The latest dream I ever dreamed
 On the cold hill's side.

I saw pale kings and princes too,
 Pale warriors, death-pale were they all:
 They cried—"La belle dame sans merci
 Hath thee in thrall!"

I saw their starved lips in the gloam
 With horrid warning gapèd wide,
 And I awoke and found me here
 On the cold hill's side.

And this is why I sojourn here
 Alone and palely loitering,
 Though the sedge is withered from the lake,
 And no birds sing.

TANTALUS—TEXAS

“If I may trust your love,” she cried,
“And you would have me for a bride,
Ride over yonder plain, and bring
Your flask full from the Mustang spring;
Fly, fast as western eagle’s wing,
O’er the Llano Estacado!”

He heard, and bowed without a word,
His gallant steed he lightly spurred!
He turned his face, and rode away
Toward the grave of dying day,
And vanished with its parting ray
On the Llano Estacado.

Night came, and found him riding on,
Day came, and still he rode alone.
He spared not spur, he drew not rein,
Across that broad, unchanging plain,
Till he the Mustang spring might gain,
On the Llano Estacado.

A little rest, a little draught,
Hot from his hand, and quickly quaffed,
His flask was filled, and then he turned.
Once more his steed the maguey spurned,
Once more the sky above him burned,
On the Llano Estacado.

How hot the quivering landscape glowed!
His brain seemed boiling as he rode—
Was it a dream, a drunken one,
Or was he really riding on?
Was that a skull that gleamed and shone
On the Llano Estacado?

“Brave steed of mine, brave steed!” he cried,
“So often true, so often tried,

Bear up a little longer yet!"
 His mouth was black with blood and sweat—
 Heaven! how he longed his lips to wet
 On the Llano Estacado.

And still, within his breast, he held
 The precious flask so lately filled.
 Oh, for a drink! But well he knew
 If empty it should meet her view,
 Her scorn—but still his longing grew
 On the Llano Estacado.

His horse went down. He wandered on,
 Giddy, blind, beaten, and alone.
 While upon cushioned couch you lie,
 Oh, think how hard it is to die,
 Beneath the cruel, cloudless sky
 On the Llano Estacado.

At last he staggered, stumbled, fell,
 His day was done, he knew full well,
 And raising to his lips the flask,
 The end, the object of his task,
 Drank to her—more she could not ask.
 Ah, the Llano Estacado!

That night in the Presidio,
 Beneath the torchlight's wavy glow,
 She danced—and never thought of him,
 The victim of a woman's whim,
 Lying, with face upturned and grim,
 On the Llano Estacado.

Joaquin Miller [1841-1913]

ENCHAINMENT

I WENT to her who loveth me no more,
 And prayed her bear with me, if so she might;
 For I had found day after day too sore,
 And tears that would not cease night after night.

And so I prayed her, weeping, that she bore
 To let me be with her a little; yea,
 To soothe myself a little with her sight,
 Who lov'd me once, ah! many a night and day.

Then she who loveth me no more, maybe
 She pitied somewhat: and I took a chain
 To bind myself to her, and her to me;
 Yea, so that I might call her mine again.
 Lo! she forbade me not; but I and she
 Fettered her fair limbs, and her neck more fair,
 Chained the fair wasted white of love's domain,
 And put gold fetters on her golden hair.

Oh! the vain joy it is to see her lie
 Beside me once again; beyond release,
 Her hair, her hand, her body, till she die,
 All mine, for me to do with what I please!
 For, after all, I find no chain whereby
 To chain her heart to love me as before,
 Nor fetter for her lips, to make them cease
 From saying still she loveth me no more.

Arthur O'Shaughnessy [1844-1881]

AULD ROBIN GRAY

WHEN the sheep are in the fauld, and the kye at hame,
 And a' the wairld to rest are gane,
 The waes o' my heart fa' in showers frae my e'e,
 While my gudeman lies sound by me.

Young Jamie lo'ed me weel, and sought me for his bride;
 But saving a croun he had naething else beside:
 To make the croun a pund, young Jamie gaed to sea;
 And the croun and the pund were baith for me.

He hadna been awa' a week but only twa,
 When my father brak his arm, and the kye was stown awa';
 My mother she fell sick,—and my Jamie at the sea—
 And auld Robin Gray came a-courtin' me.

My father couldna work, and my mother couldna spin;
 I toiled day and night, but their bread I couldna win;
 Auld Rob maintained them baith, and wi' tears in his e'e
 Said, "Jennie, for their sakes, O, marry me!"

My heart it said nay; I looked for Jamie back;
 But the wind it blew high, and the ship it was a wrack;
 His ship it was a wrack—Why didna Jamie dee?
 Or why do I live to cry, Wae's me!

My father urged me sair: my mother didna speak;
 But she looked in my face till my heart was like to break:
 They gi'ed him my hand, though my heart was in the sea;
 Sae auld Robin Gray he was gudeman to me.

I hadna been a wife a week but only four,
 When mournfu' as I sat on the stane at the door,
 I saw my Jamie's wraith,—for I couldna think it he,
 Till he said, "I'm come hame to marry thee."

O, sair, sair did we greet, and muckle did we say;
 We took but ae kiss, and we tore ourselves away:
 I wish that I were dead, but I'm no like to dee;
 And why was I born to say, Wae's me!

I gang like a ghaist, and I carena to spin;
 I daurna think on Jamie, for that wad be a sin;
 But I'll do my best a gude wife aye to be,
 For auld Robin Gray he is kind unto me.

Anne Barnard [1750-1825]

LOST LIGHT

My heart is chilled and my pulse is slow,
 But often and often will memory go,
 Like a blind child lost in a waste of snow,
 Back to the days when I loved you so—
 The beautiful long ago.

I sit here dreaming them through and through,
 The blissful moments I shared with you—

The sweet, sweet days when our love was new,
When I was trustful and you were true—
 Beautiful days, but few!

Blest or wretched, fettered or free,
Why should I care how your life may be,
Or whether you wander by land or sea?
I only know you are dead to me,
 Ever and hopelessly.

Oh, how often at day's decline
I pushed from my window the curtaining vine,
To see from your lattice the lamp-light shine—
Type of a message that, half divine,
 Flashed from your heart to mine.

Once more the starlight is silverying all;
The roses sleep by the garden wall;
The night bird warbles his madrigal,
And I hear again through the sweet air fall
 The evening bugle-call.

But summers will vanish and years will wane,
And bring no light to your window pane;
Nor gracious sunshine nor patient rain
Can bring dead love back to life again:
 I call up the past in vain.

My heart is heavy, my heart is old,
And that proves dross which I counted gold;
I watch no longer your curtain's fold;
The window is dark and the night is cold,
 And the story forever told.

Elizabeth Akers [1832-1911]

A SIGH

It was nothing but a rose I gave her,—
 Nothing but a rose
Any wind might rob of half its savor,
 Any wind that blows.

When she took it from my trembling fingers
 With a hand as chill—
 Ah, the flying touch upon them lingers,
 Stays, and thrills them still!

Withered, faded, pressed between the pages,
 Crumpled fold on fold,—
 Once it lay upon her breast, and ages
 Cannot make it old!

Harriet Prescott Spofford [1835]

HEREAFTER

LOVE, when all the years are silent, vanished quite and laid
 to rest,
 When you and I are sleeping, folded breathless breast to
 breast,
 When no morrow is before us, and the long grass tosses o'er
 us,
 And our grave remains forgotten, or by alien footsteps
 pressed—

Still that love of ours will linger, that great love enrich the
 earth,
 Sunshine in the heavenly azure, breezes blowing joyous
 mirth;
 Fragrance fanning off from flowers, melody of summer
 showers,
 Sparkle of the spicy wood-fires round the happy autumn
 hearth.

That's our love. But you and I, dear—shall we linger with
 it yet,
 Mingled in one dew-drop, tangled in one sunbeam's golden
 net—
 On the violet's purple bosom, I the sheen, but you the blos-
 som,
 Stream on sunset winds, and be the haze with which some
 hill is wet?

Or, belovèd—if ascending—when we have endowed the world
 With the best bloom of our being, whither will our way be whirled,
 Through what vast and starry spaces, toward what awful, holy places,
 With a white light on our faces, spirit over spirit furled?

Only this our yearning answers: wheresoe'er that way defile,
 Not a film shall part us through the eons of that mighty while,
 In the fair eternal weather, even as phantoms still together,
 Floating, floating, one forever, in the light of God's great smile.

Harriet Prescott Spofford [1835—

ENDYMION

THE apple trees are hung with gold,
 And birds are loud in Arcady,
 The sheep lie bleating in the fold,
 The wild goat runs across the wold,
 But yesterday his love he told,
 I know he will come back to me.
 O rising moon! O Lady moon!
 Be you my lover's sentinel,
 You cannot choose but know him well,
 For he is shod with purple shoon,
 You cannot choose but know my love,
 For he a shepherd's crook doth bear,
 And he is soft as any dove,
 And brown and curly is his hair.

The turtle now has ceased to call
 Upon her crimson-footed groom,
 The gray wolf prowls about the stall,
 The lily's singing seneschal
 Sleeps in the lily-bell, and all
 The violet hills are lost in gloom.

O risen moon! O holy moon!
 Stand on the top of Helice,
 And if my own true love you see,
 Ah! if you see the purple shoon,
 The hazel crook, the lad's brown hair,
 The goat-skin wrapped about his arm,
 Tell him that I am waiting where
 The rushlight glimmers in the Farm.

The falling dew is cold and chill,
 And no bird sings in Arcady,
 The little fauns have left the hill,
 Even the tired daffodil
 Has closed its gilded doors, and still
 My lover comes not back to me.
 False moon! False moon! O waning moon!
 Where is my own true lover gone,
 Where are the lips vermillion,
 The shepherd's crook, the purple shoon?
 Why spread that silver pavilion,
 Why wear that veil of drifting mist?
 Ah! thou hast young Endymion,
 Thou hast the lips that should be kissed!

Oscar Wilde [1856-1900]

"LOVE IS A TERRIBLE THING"

I WENT out to the farthest meadow,
 I lay down in the deepest shadow;
 And I said unto the earth, "Hold me,"
 And unto the night, "Oh, enfold me!"
 And I begged the little leaves to lean
 Low and together for a safe screen;
 Then to the stars I told my tale:
 "That is my home-light, there in the vale,
 "And oh, I know that I shall return,
 But let me lie first mid the unfeeling fern;

"For there is a flame that has blown too near,
And there is a name that has grown too dear,
And there is a fear."

And to the still hills and cool earth and far sky I made moan,
"The heart in my bosom is not my own!"

"Oh, would I were free as the wind on the wing;
Love is a terrible thing!"

Grace Fallow Norton [18 -

THE BALLAD OF THE ANGEL

"Who is it knocking in the night,
That fain would enter in?"
"The ghost of Lost Delight am I,
The sin you would not sin,
Who comes to look in your two eyes
And see what might have been."

"Oh, long ago and long ago
I cast you forth," he said,
"For that your eyes were all too blue,
Your laughing mouth too red,
And my torn soul was tangled in
The tresses of your head."

"Now mind you with what bitter words
You cast me forth from you?"
"I bade you back to that fair Hell
From whence your breath you drew,
And with great blows I broke my heart
Lest it might follow too.

"Yea, from the grasp of your white hands
I freed my hands that day,
And have I not climbed near to God
As these His henchmen may?"
"Ah, man,—ah, man! 'twas my two hands
That led you all the way."

"I hid my eyes from your two eyes
 That they might see aright."
 "Yet think you 'twas a star that led
 Your feet from height to height?
 It was the flame of my two eyes
 That drew you through the night."

With trembling hands he threw the door,
 Then fell upon his knee:
 "O, Vision armed and cloaked in light,
 Why do you honor me?"
 "The Angel of your Strength am I
 Who was your sin," quoth she.

"For that you slew me long ago
 My hands have raised you high;
 For that mine eyes you closed, mine eyes
 Are lights to lead you by;
 And 'tis my touch shall swing the gates
 Of Heaven when you die!"

Theodosia Garrison [18 -

"LOVE CAME BACK AT FALL O' DEW"

LOVE came back at fall o' dew,
 Playing his old part;
 But I had a word or two,
 That would break his heart.

"He who comes at candlelight,
 That should come before,
 Must betake him to the night
 From a barrèd door."

This the word that made us part
 In the fall o' dew;
 This the word that brake his heart—
 Yet it brake mine, too!

Lizette Woodworth Reese [1856-

IN A YEAR

NEVER any more,
While I live,
Need I hope to see his face
As before.
Once his love grown chill,
Mine may strive:
Bitterly we re-embrace,
Single still.

Was it something said,
Something done,
Vexed him? Was it touch of hand,
Turn of head?
Strange! that very way
Love begun:
I as little understand
Love's decay.

When I sewed or drew,
I recall
How he looked as if I sung
—Sweetly too.
If I spoke a word,
First of all
Up his cheek the color sprung,
Then he heard.

Sitting by my side,
At my feet,
So he breathed but air I breathed,
Satisfied!
I, too, at love's brim
Touched the sweet:
I would die if death bequeathed
Sweet to him.

“Speak, I love thee best!”
He exclaimed:
“Let thy love my own foretell!”
I confessed:

"Clasp my heart on thine
 Now unblamed,
 Since upon thy soul as well
 Hangeth mine!"

Was it wrong to own,
 Being truth?
 Why should all the giving prove
 His alone?
 I had wealth and ease,
 Beauty, youth:
 Since my lover gave me love,
 I gave these.

That was all I meant,
 —To be just,
 And the passion I had raised
 To content.
 Since he chose to change
 Gold for dust,
 If I gave him what he praised,
 Was it strange?

Would he loved me yet,
 On and on,
 While I found some way undreamed,
 —Paid my debt!
 Gave more life and more,
 Till, all gone,
 He should smile, "She never seemed
 Mine before.

"What, she felt the while,
 Must I think?
 Love's so different with us men!"
 He should smile:
 "Dying for my sake—
 White and pink!
 Can't we touch these bubbles then
 But they break?"

Dear, the pang is brief.
Do thy part,
Have thy pleasure! How perplexed
Grows belief!
Well, this cold clay clod
Was man's heart:
Crumble it, and what comes next?
Is it God?

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

OUTGROWN

NAY, you wrong her, my friend, she's not fickle; her love she
has simply outgrown:
One can read the whole matter, translating her heart by the
light of one's own.

Can you bear me to talk with you frankly? There is much
that my heart would say;
And you know we were children together, have quarreled
and "made up" in play.

And so, for the sake of old friendship, I venture to tell you
the truth,—
As plainly, perhaps, and as bluntly, as I might in our earlier
youth.

Five summers ago, when you wooed her, you stood on the
selfsame plane,
Face to face, heart to heart, never dreaming your souls
should be parted again.

She loved you at that time entirely, in the bloom of her life's
early May;
And it is not her fault, I repeat it, that she does not love you
to-day.

Nature never stands still, nor souls either: they ever go up
or go down;
And hers has been steadily soaring—but how has it been
with your own?

She has struggled and yearned and aspired, grown purer and wiser each year:

The stars are not farther above you in yon luminous atmosphere!

For she whom you crowned with fresh roses, down yonder, five summers ago,

Has learned that the first of our duties to God and ourselves is to grow.

Her eyes they are sweeter and calmer: but their vision is clearer as well;

Her voice has a tenderer cadence, but is pure as a silver bell.

Her face has the look worn by those who with God and his angels have talked:

The white robes she wears are less white than the spirits with whom she has walked.

And you? Have you aimed at the highest? Have you, too, aspired and prayed?

Have you looked upon evil unsullied? Have you conquered it undismayed?

Have you, too, grown purer and wiser, as the months and the years have rolled on?

Did you meet her this morning rejoicing in the triumph of victory won?

Nay, hear me! The truth cannot harm you. When to-day in her presence you stood

Was the hand that you gave her as white and clean as that of her womanhood?

Go measure yourself by her standard; look back on the years that have fled:

Then ask, if you need, why she tells you that the love of her girlhood is dead.

She cannot look down to her lover: her love, like her soul, aspires;

He must stand by her side, or above her, who would kindle its holy fires.

Now farewell! For the sake of old friendship I have ventured to tell you the truth,
As plainly, perhaps, and as bluntly as I might in our earlier youth.

Julia C. R. Dorr [1825-1913]

A TRAGEDY

AMONG his books he sits all day
To think and read and write;
He does not smell the new-mown hay,
The roses red and white.

I walk among them all alone,
His silly, stupid wife;
The world seems tasteless, dead and done—
An empty thing is life.

At night his window casts a square
Of light upon the lawn;
I sometimes walk and watch it there
Until the chill of dawn.

I have no brain to understand
The books he loves to read;
I only have a heart and hand
He does not seem to need.

He calls me "Child"—lays on my hair
Thin fingers, cold and mild;
Oh! God of Love, who answers prayer,
I wish I were a child!

And no one sees and no one knows
(He least would know or see),
That ere Love gathers next year's rose
Death will have gathered me.

Edith Nesbit [1858-

LEFT BEHIND

It was the autumn of the year;
The strawberry-leaves were red and sere;
October's airs were fresh and chill,
When, pausing on the windy hill,
The hill that overlooks the sea,
You talked confidingly to me,—
Me whom your keen, artistic sight
Has not yet learned to read aright,
Since I have veiled my heart from you,
And loved you better than you knew.

You told me of your toilsome past;
The tardy honors won at last,
The trials borne, the conquests gained,
The longed-for boon of Fame attained;
I knew that every victory
But lifted you away from me,
That every step of high emprise
But left me lowlier in your eyes;
I watched the distance as it grew,
And loved you better than you knew.

You did not see the bitter trace
Of anguish sweep across my face;
You did not hear my proud heart beat,
Heavy and slow, beneath your feet;
You thought of triumphs still unwon,
Of glorious deeds as yet undone;
And I, the while you talked to me,
I watched the gulls float lonesomely,
Till lost amid the hungry blue,
And loved you better than you knew.

You walk the sunny side of fate;
The wise world smiles, and calls you great;
The golden fruitage of success
Drops at your feet in plenteousness;
And you have blessings manifold:—
Renown and power and friends and gold,—

They build a wall between us twain,
Which may not be thrown down again,
Alas! for I, the long years through,
Have loved you better than you knew.

Your life's proud aim, your art's high truth,
Have kept the promise of your youth;
And while you won the crown, which now
Breaks into bloom upon your brow,
My soul cried strongly out to you
Across the ocean's yearning blue,
While, unremembered and afar,
I watched you, as I watch a star
Through darkness struggling into view,
And loved you better than you knew.

I used to dream in all these years
Of patient faith and silent tears,
That Love's strong hand would put aside
The barriers of place and pride,
Would reach the pathless darkness through,
And draw me softly up to you;
But that is past. If you should stray
Beside my grave, some future day,
Perchance the violets o'er my dust
Will half betray their buried trust,
And say, their blue eyes full of dew,
“She loved you better than you knew.”

Elizabeth Akers [1832-1911]

THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

COME, dear children, let us away;
Down and away below!
Now my brothers call from the bay,
Now the great winds shoreward blow,
Now the salt tides seaward flow;
Now the wild white horses play,
Champ and chafe and toss in the spray.
Children dear, let us away!
This way, this way!

Call her once before you go.—
 Call once yet!
In a voice that she will know:
 “Margaret! Margaret!”
Children’s voices should be dear
(Call once more) to a mother’s ear;
Children’s voices, wild with pain,—
 Surely she will come again!
Call her once and come away;
 This way, this way!
“Mother dear, we cannot stay!
The wild white horses foam and fret.”
 Margaret! Margaret!

Come, dear children, come away down;
 Call no more!
One last look at the white-walled town,
And the little gray church on the windy shore;
 Then come down!
She will not come, though you call all day;
 Come away, come away!

Children dear, was it yesterday
We heard the sweet bells over the bay?
In the caverns where we lay,
Through the surf and through the swell,
The far-off sound of a silver bell?
Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,
Where the winds are all asleep;
Where the spent lights quiver and gleam,
Where the salt weed sways in the stream,
Where the sea-beasts, ranged all round,
Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground;
Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,
Dry their mail and bask in the brine;
Where great whales come sailing by,
Sail and sail, with unshut eye,
Round the world for ever and aye?
 When did music come this way?
 Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, was it yesterday
(Call yet once) that she went away?
Once she sate with you and me,
On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,
And the youngest sate on her knee.
She combed its bright hair, and she tended it well,
When down swung the sound of the far-off bell.
She sighed, she looked up through the clear green sea;
She said: "I must go, for my kinsfolk pray
In the little gray church on the shore to-day.
'Twill be Easter-time in the world,—ah me!
And I lose my poor soul, Merman, here with thee."
I said: "Go up, dear heart, through the waves:
Say thy prayer, and come back to the kind sea-caves!"
She smiled, she went up through the surf in the bay.

Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, were we long alone?
"The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan;
Long prayers," I said, "in the world they say;
Come!" I said, and we rose through the surf in the bay.
We went up the beach, by the sandy down
Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-walled town,
Through the narrow paved streets, where all was still,
To the little gray church on the windy hill.
From the church came a murmur of folk at their prayers,
But we stood without in the cold blowing airs.
We climbed on the graves, on the stones worn with
 rains,
And we gazed up the aisle through the small leaded
 panes.
She sate by the pillar; we saw her clear:
"Margaret, hist! come quick, we are here!
Dear heart," I said, "we are long alone;
The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan."
But, ah, she gave me never a look,
For her eyes were sealed to the holy book!
Loud prays the priest; shut stands the door.
Come away, children, call no more!
Come away, come down, call no more!

Down, down, down!
Down to the depths of the sea!
She sits at her wheel in the humming town,
Singing most joyfully.
Hark what she sings: "O joy, O joy,
From the humming street, and the child with its toy!
From the priest, and the bell, and the holy well;
From the wheel where I spun,
And the blessed light of the sun!"
And so she sings her fill,
Singing most joyfully,
Till the spindle drops from her hand,
And the whizzing wheel stands still.
She steals to the window, and looks at the sand,
And over the sand at the sea;
And her eyes are set in a stare,
And anon there breaks a sigh,
And anon there drops a tear,
From a sorrow-clouded eye,
And a heart sorrow-laden,
A long, long sigh;
For the cold strange eyes of a little Mermaiden,
And the gleam of her golden hair.

Come away, away, children;
Come, children, come down!
The hoarse wind blows colder;
Lights shine in the town.
She will start from her slumber
When gusts shake the door;
She will hear the winds howling,
Will hear the waves roar.
We shall see, while above us
The waves roar and whirl,
A ceiling of amber,
A pavement of pearl.
Singing: "Here came a mortal,
But faithless was she!
And alone dwell for ever
The kings of the sea."

But, children, at midnight,
When soft the winds blow,
When clear falls the moonlight,
When spring-tides are low;
When sweet airs come seaward
From heaths starred with broom,
And high rocks throw mildly
On the blanched sands a gloom;
Up the still, glistening beaches,
Up the creeks we will hie;
Over banks of bright seaweed
The ebb-tide leaves dry.
We will gaze, from the sand-hills,
At the white, sleeping town;
At the church on the hillside—
And then come back down.
Singing: "There dwells a loved one,
But cruel is she!
She left lonely for ever
The kings of the sea."

Matthew Arnold [1822-1888]

THE PORTRAIT

MIDNIGHT past! Not a sound of aught
Through the silent house, but the wind at his prayers.
I sat by the dying fire, and thought
Of the dear dead woman up-stairs.

A night of tears! for the gusty rain
Had ceased, but the eaves were dripping yet;
And the moon looked forth, as though in pain,
With her face all white and wet:

Nobody with me, my watch to keep,
But the friend of my bosom, the man I love:
And grief had sent him fast to sleep
In the chamber up above.

Nobody else, in the country place
 All round, that knew of my loss beside,
 But the good young Priest with the Raphael-face,
 Who confessed her when she died.

That good young Priest is of gentle nerve,
 And my grief had moved him beyond control;
 For his lip grew white, as I could observe,
 When he speeded her parting soul.

I sat by the dreary hearth alone:
 I thought of the pleasant days of yore:
 I said, "The staff of my life is gone:
 The woman I loved is no more."

"On her cold dead bosom my portrait lies,
 Which next to her heart she used to wear—
 Haunting it o'er with her tender eyes
 When my own face was not there.

"It is set all round with rubies red,
 And pearls which a Peri might have kept.
 For each ruby there my heart hath bled:
 For each pearl my eyes have wept."

And I said—"The thing is precious to me:
 They will bury her soon in the churchyard clay;
 It lies on her heart, and lost must be
 If I do not take it away."

I lighted my lamp at the dying flame,
 And crept up the stairs that creaked for fright,
 Till into the chamber of death I came,
 Where she lay all in white.

The moon shone over her winding-sheet,
 There stark she lay on her carven bed:
 Seven burning tapers about her feet,
 And seven about her head.

As I stretched my hand, I held my breath;
I turned as I drew the curtains apart:
I dared not look on the face of death:
I knew where to find her heart.

I thought at first, as my touch fell there,
It had warmed that heart to life, with love;
For the thing I touched was warm, I swear,
And I could feel it move.

'Twas the hand of a man, that was moving slow
O'er the heart of the dead,—from the other side:
And at once the sweat broke over my brow:
"Who is robbing the corpse?" I cried.

Opposite me by the tapers' light,
The friend of my bosom, the man I loved,
Stood over the corpse, and all as white,
And neither of us moved.

"What do you here, my friend?" . . . The man
Looked first at me, and then at the dead.
"There is a portrait here," he began:
"There is. It is mine," I said.

Said the friend of my bosom, "Yours, no doubt,
The portrait was, till a month ago,
When this suffering angel took that out,
And placed mine there, I know."

"This woman, she loved me well," said I.
"A month ago," said my friend to me:
"And in your throat," I groaned, "you lie!"
He answered, . . . "Let us see."

"Enough!" I returned, "let the dead decide:
And whosoever the portrait prove,
His shall it be, when the cause is tried,
Where Death is arraigned by Love."

We found the protrait there, in its place:
 We opened it by the tapers' shine:
 The gems were all unchanged: the face
 Was—neither his nor mine.

"One nail drives out another, at least!
 The face of the portrait there," I cried,
 "Is our friend's, the Raphael-faced young Priest,
 Who confessed her when she died."

The setting is all of rubies red,
 And pearls which a Peri might have kept.
 For each ruby there my heart hath bled:
 For each pearl my eyes have wept.

Edward Robert Bulwer Lytton [1831-1891]

THE ROSE AND THORN

SHE's loveliest of the festal throng
 In delicate form and Grecian face,—
 A beautiful, incarnate song,
 A marvel of harmonious grace;
 And yet I know the truth I speak:
 From those gay groups she stands apart,
 A rose upon her tender cheek,
 A thorn within her heart.

Though bright her eyes' bewildering gleams,
 Fair tremulous lips and shining hair,
 A something born of mournful dreams
 Breathes round her sad enchanted air;
 No blithesome thoughts at hide and seek
 From out her dimples smiling start;
 If still the rose be on her cheek,
 A thorn is in her heart.

Young lover, tossed 'twixt hope and fear,
 Your whispered vow and yearning eyes
 Yon marble Clytie pillared near
 Could move as soon to soft replies;

Or, if she thrill at words you speak,
Love's memory prompts the sudden start;
The rose has paled upon her cheek,
The thorn has pierced her heart.

Paul Hamilton Hayne [1830-1886]

TO HER—UNSPOKEN

Go to him, ah, go to him, and lift your eyes aglow to him;
Fear not royally to give whatever he may claim;
All your spirit's treasury scruple not to show to him.
He is noble; meet him with a pride too high for shame.

Say to him, ah, say to him, that soul and body sway to him;
Cast away the cowardice that counsels you to flight,
Lest you turn at last to find that you have lost the way to
him,
Lest you stretch your arms in vain across a starless night.

Be to him, ah, be to him, the key that sets joy free to him;
Teach him all the tenderness that only love can know,
And if ever there should come a memory of me to him,
Bid him judge me gently for the sake of long ago.

Amelia Josephine Burr [18 -

A LIGHT WOMAN

So far as our story approaches the end,
Which do you pity the most of us three?—
My friend, or the mistress of my friend
With her wanton eyes, or me?

My friend was already too good to lose,
And seemed in the way of improvement yet,
When she crossed his path with her hunting-noose,
And over him drew her net.

When I saw him tangled in her toils,
A shame, said I, if she adds just him
To her nine-and-ninety other spoils,
The hundredth for a whim!

And before my friend be wholly hers,
How easy to prove to him, I said,
An eagle's the game her pride prefers,
Though she snaps at a wren instead!

So, I gave her eyes my own eyes to take,
My hand sought hers as in earnest need,
And round she turned for my noble sake,
And gave me herself indeed.

The eagle am I, with my fame in the world,
The wren is he, with his maiden face.
—You look away and your lip is curled?
Patience, a moment's space!

For see, my friend goes shaking and white;
He eyes me as the basilisk:
I have turned, it appears, his day to night,
Eclipsing his sun's disk.

And I did it, he thinks, as a very thief:
“ Though I love her—that, he comprehends—
One should master one's passions, (love, in chief)
And be loyal to one's friends!”

And she,—she lies in my hand as tame
As a pear late basking over a wall;
Just a touch to try and off it came;
'Tis mine,—can I let it fall?

With no mind to eat it, that's the worst!
Were it thrown in the road, would the case assist?
'Twas quenching a dozen blue-flies' thirst
When I gave its stalk a twist.

And I,—what I seem to my friend, you see:
What I soon shall seem to his love, you guess:
What I seem to myself, do you ask of me?
No hero, I confess.

'Tis an awkward thing to play with souls,
 And matter enough to save one's own:
 Yet think of my friend, and the burning coals
 He played with for bits of stone!

One likes to show the truth for the truth;
 That the woman was light is very true:
 But suppose she says,—Never mind that youth!
 What wrong have I done to you?

Well, anyhow, here the story stays,
 So far at least as I understand;
 And, Robert Browning, you writer of plays,
 Here's a subject made to your hand!

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

FROM THE TURKISH

THE chain I gave was fair to view,
 The lute I added sweet in sound,
 The heart that offered both was true,
 And ill deserved the fate it found.

These gifts were charmed by secret spell
 Thy truth in absence to divine;
 And they have done their duty well,
 Alas! they could not teach thee thine.

That chain was firm in every link,
 But not to bear a stranger's touch;
 That lute was sweet—till thou couldst think
 In other hands its notes were such.

Let him, who from thy neck unbound
 The chain which shivered in his grasp,
 Who saw that lute refuse to sound,
 Restrung the chords, renew the clasp.

When thou wert changed, they altered too;
 The chain is broke, the music mute:
 'Tis past—to them and thee adieu—
 False heart, frail chain, and silent lute.

George Gordon Byron [1788-1824]

A SUMMER WOOING

THE wind went wooing the rose,
 For the rose was fair.
 How the rough wind won her, who knows?
 But he left her there.
 Far away from her grave he blows:
 Does the free wind care?

Louise Chandler Moulton [1835-1908]

BUTTERFLIES

At sixteen years she knew no care;
 How could she, sweet and pure as light?
 And there pursued her everywhere
 Butterflies all white.

A lover looked. She dropped her eyes
 That glowed like pansies wet with dew;
 And lo, there came from out the skies
 Butterflies all blue.

Before she guessed her heart was gone;
 The tale of love was swiftly told;
 And all about her wheeled and shone
 Butterflies all gold.

Then he forsook her one sad morn;
 She wept and sobbed, "Oh, love, come back!"
 There only came to her forlorn
 Butterflies all black.

John Davidson [1857-1909]

UNSEEN SPIRITS

THE shadows lay along Broadway,
 'Twas near the twilight-tide,
 And slowly there a lady fair
 Was walking in her pride.
 Alone walked she; but, viewlessly,
 Walked spirits at her side.

Peace charmed the street beneath her feet,
And Honor charmed the air;
And all astir looked kind on her,
And called her good as fair,—
For all God ever gave to her
She kept with chary care.

She kept with care her beauties rare
From lovers warm and true,
For her heart was cold to all but gold,
And the rich came not to woo—
But honored well are charms to sell
If priests the selling do.

Now walking there was one more fair—
A slight girl, lily-pale;
And she had unseen company
To make the spirit quail:
'Twixt Want and Scorn she walked forlorn,
And nothing could avail.

No mercy now can clear her brow
For this world's peace to pray;
For, as love's wild prayer dissolved in air,
Her woman's heart gave way!—
But the sin forgiven by Christ in heaven
By man is cursed alway!

Nathaniel Parker Willis [1806-1867]

"GRANDMITHER, THINK NOT I FORGET"

GRANDMITHER, think not I forget, when I come back to town,
An' wander the old ways again, an' tread them up and down.
I never smell the clover bloom, nor see the swallows pass,
Without I mind how good ye were unto a little lass.
I never hear the winter rain a-pelting all night through,
Without I think and mind me of how cold it falls on you.
And if I come not often to your bed beneath the thyme,
Mayhap 'tis that I'd change wi' ye, and gie my bed for thine,
Would like to sleep in thine.

I never hear the summer winds among the roses blow,
 Without I wonder why it was ye loved the lassie so.
 Ye gave me cakes and lollipops and pretty toys a store,—
 I never thought I should come back and ask ye now for more.
 Grandmither, gie me your still, white hands, that lie upon
 your breast,
 For mine do beat the dark all night, and never find me
 rest;
 They grope among the shadows, an' they beat the cold black
 air,
 They go seekin' in the darkness, an' they never find him
 there,
 They never find him there.

Grandmither, gie me your sightless eyes, that I may never
 see
 His own a-burnin' full o' love that must not shine for me.
 Grandmither, gie me your peaceful lips, white as the kirk-
 yard snow,
 For mine be tremblin' wi' the wish that he must never
 know.
 Grandmither, gie me your clay-stopped ears, that I may
 never hear
 My lad a-singin' in the night when I am sick wi' fear;
 A-singin' when the moonlight over a' the land is white—
 Ah, God! I'll up an' go to him a-singin' in the night,
 A-callin' in the night.

Grandmither, gie me your clay-cold heart that has forgot to
 ache,
 For mine be fire within my breast and yet it cannot break.
 Wi' every beat it's callin' for things that must not be,—
 An' can ye not let me creep in an' rest awhile by ye?
 A little lass afeard o' dark slept by ye years agone—
 An' she has found what night can hold 'twixt sundown an'
 the dawn!
 So when I plant the rose an' rue above your grave for ye,
 Ye'll know it's under rue an' rose that I would like to be,
 That I would like to be.

Willa Sibert Cather [1875—]

LITTLE WILD BABY

THROUGH the fierce fever I nursed him, and then he said
 I was the woman—I!—that he would wed;
 He sent a boat with men for his own white priest,
 And he gave my father horses, and made a feast.
 I am his wife: if he has forgotten me,
 I will not live for scorning eyes to see.

(*Little wild baby, that knowest not where thou art going,
 Lie still! lie still! Thy mother will do the rowing.*)

Three moons ago—it was but three moons ago—
 He took his gun, and started across the snow;
 For the river was frozen, the river that still goes down
 Every day, as I watch it, to find the town;
 The town whose name I caught from his sleeping lips,
 A place of many people and many ships.

(*Little wild baby, that knowest not where thou art going,
 Lie still! lie still! Thy mother will do the rowing.*)

I to that town am going, to search the place,
 With his little white son in my arms, till I see his face.
 Only once shall I need to look in his eyes,
 To see if his soul, as I knew it, lives or dies.
 If it lives, we live, and if it is dead, we die,
 And the soul of my baby will never ask me why.
 (*Little wild baby, that knowest not where thou art going,
 Lie still! lie still! Thy mother will do the rowing.*)

I have asked about the river: one answered me,
 That after the town it goes to find the sea;
 That great waves, able to break the stoutest bark,
 Are there, and the sea is very deep and dark.
 If he is happy without me, so best, so best;
 I will take his baby and go away to my rest.
 (*Little wild baby, that knowest not where thou art going,
 Lie still! lie still! Thy mother will do the rowing.*
*The river flows swiftly, the sea is dark and deep:
 Little wild baby, lie still! Lie still and sleep.*)

Margaret Thomson Janvier [1845-1913]

A CRADLE SONG

COME little babe, come silly soul,
 Thy father's shame, thy mother's grief,
 Born as I doubt to all our dole,
 And to thyself unhappy chief:
 Sing lullaby, and lap it warm,
 Poor soul that thinks no creature harm.

Thou little think'st and less dost know
 The cause of this thy mother's moan;
 Thou want'st the wit to wail her woe,
 And I myself am all alone:
 Why dost thou weep? why dost thou wail?
 And know'st not yet what thou dost ail.

Come, little wretch—ah, silly heart!
 Mine only joy, what can I more?
 If there be any wrong thy smart,
 That may the destinies implore:
 'Twas I, I say, against my will,
 I wail the time, but be thou still.

And dost thou smile? O, thy sweet face!
 Would God Himself He might thee see!—
 No doubt thou wouldst soon purchase grace,
 I know right well, for thee and me:
 But come to mother, babe, and play,
 For father false is fled away.

Sweet boy, if it by fortune chance
 Thy father home again to send,
 If death do strike me with his lance,
 Yet may'st thou me to him commend:
 If any ask thy mother's name,
 Tell how by love she purchased blame.

Then will his gentle heart soon yield:
 I know him of a noble mind:
 Although a lion in the field,
 A lamb in town thou shalt him find:

Ask blessing, babe, be not afraid,
His sugared words hath me betrayed.

Then may'st thou joy and be right glad;
Although in woe I seem to moan,
Thy father is no rascal lad,
A noble youth of blood and bone:
His glancing looks, if he once smile,
Right honest women may beguile.

Come, little boy, and rock asleep;
Sing lullaby and be thou still;
I, that can do naught else but weep,
Will sit by thee and wail my fill:
God bless my babe, and lullaby
From this thy father's quality.

Nicholas Breton [1545?-1626?]

LADY ANNE BOTHWELL'S LAMENT

BALOW, my babe, lie still and sleep!
It grieves me sore to see thee weep.
Wouldst thou be quiet I'se be glad,
Thy mourning makes my sorrow sad:
Balow my boy, thy mother's joy,
Thy father breeds me great annoy—
Balow, la-low!

When he began to court my love,
And with his sugared words me move,
His feignings false and flattering cheer
To me that time did not appear:
But now I see most cruelly
He cares ne for my babe nor me—
Balow, la-low!

Lie still, my darling, sleep awhile,
And when thou wak'st thou'll sweetly smile:
But smile not as thy father did,
To cozen maids: nay, God forbid!

But yet I fear thou wilt go near
 Thy father's heart and face to bear—
 Balow, la-low!

I cannot choose but ever will
 Be loving to thy father still;
 Where'er he go, where'er he ride,
 My love with him doth still abide;
 In weal or woe, where'er he go,
 My heart shall ne'er depart him fro—
 Balow, la-low!

But do not, do not, pretty mine,
 To feignings false thy heart incline!
 Be loyal to thy lover true,
 And never change her for a new:
 If good or fair, of her have care
 For women's banning's wondrous sair—
 Balow, la-low!

Bairn, by thy face I will beware;
 Like Sirens' words, I'll come not near;
 My babe and I together will live;
 He'll comfort me when cares do grieve.
 My babe and I right soft will lie,
 And ne'er respect man's cruelty—
 Balow, la-low!

Farewell, farewell, the falsest youth
 That ever kissed a woman's mouth!
 I wish all maids be warned by me
 Never to trust man's courtesy;
 For if we do but chance to bow,
 They'll use us then they care not how—
 Balow, la-low!

Unknown

A WOMAN'S LOVE

A SENTINEL angel, sitting high in glory,
 Heard this shrill wail ring out from Purgatory:
 "Have mercy, mighty angel, hear my story!"

"I loved,—and, blind with passionate love, I fell.
Love brought me down to death, and death to Hell;
For God is just, and death for sin is well.

"I do not rage against His high decree,
Nor for myself do ask that grace shall be;
But for my love on earth who mourns for me.

"Great Spirit! Let me see my love again
And comfort him one hour, and I were fain
To pay a thousand years of fire and pain."

Then said the pitying angel, "Nay, repent
That wild vow! Look, the dial-finger's bent
Down to the last hour of thy punishment!"

But still she wailed, "I pray thee, let me go!
I cannot rise to peace and leave him so.
O, let me soothe him in his bitter woe!"

The brazen gates ground sullenly ajar,
And upwards, joyous, like a rising star,
She rose and vanished in the ether far.

But soon adown the dying sunset sailing,
And like a wounded bird her pinions trailing,
She fluttered back, with broken-hearted wailing,

She sobbed, "I found him by the summer sea
Reclined, his head upon a maiden's knee,—
She curled his hair and kissed him. Woe is me!"

She wept, "Now let my punishment begin!
I have been fond and foolish. Let me in
To expiate my sorrow and my sin."

The angel answered, "Nay, sad soul, go higher!
To be deceived in your true heart's desire
Was bitterer than a thousand years of fire!"

John Hay [1838-1905]

A TRAGEDY

SHE was only a woman, famished for loving,
 Mad with devotion, and such slight things;
 And he was a very great musician,
 And used to finger his fiddle-strings.

Her heart's sweet gamut is cracking and breaking
 For a look, for a touch,—for such slight things;
 But he's such a very great musician
 Grimacing and fingering his fiddle-strings.

Théophile Marzials [1850]

“MOTHER, I CANNOT MIND MY WHEEL”

MOTHER, I cannot mind my wheel;
 My fingers ache, my lips are dry:
 O, if you felt the pain I feel!
 But O, who ever felt as I?

No longer could I doubt him true—
 All other men may use deceit;
 He always said my eyes were blue,
 And often swore my lips were sweet.

Walter Savage Landor [1775-1864]

AIRLY BEACON

AIRLY Beacon, Airly Beacon;
 O the pleasant sight to see
 Shires and towns from Airly Beacon,
 While my love climbed up to me!

Airly Beacon, Airly Beacon;
 O the happy hours we lay
 Deep in fern on Airly Beacon,
 Courting through the summer's day!

Airly Beacon, Airly Beacon;
 O the weary haunt for me,
 All alone on Airly Beacon,
 With his baby on my knee!

Charles Kingsley [1819-1875]

A SEA CHILD

THE lover of child Marjory
 Had one white hour of life brim full;
 Now the old nurse, the rocking sea,
 Hath him to lull.

The daughter of child Marjory
 Hath in her veins, to beat and run,
 The glad indomitable sea,
 The strong white sun.

Bliss Carman [1861-

FROM THE HARBOR HILL

“Is it a sail?” she asked.
 “No,” I said.
 “Only a white sea-gull with its pinions spread.”
 “Is it a spar?” she asked.
 “No,” said I.
 “Only the slender light-house tower against the sky.”
 “Flutters a pennant there?”
 “No,” I said.
 “Only a shred of cloud in the sunset red.”
 “Surely a hull, a hull!”
 “Where?” I cried.
 “Only a rock half-bared by the ebbing tide.”

“Wait you a ship?” I asked.
 “Aye!” quoth she.
 “The *Harbor Belle*; her mate comes home to marry me.

“Surely the good ship hath
 Met no harm?”
 Was it the west wind wailed or the babe on her arm?

“The *Harbor Belle!*” she urged.
 Naught said I.—
 For I knew o'er the grave o' the *Harbor Belle* the sea-gulls fly.
Gustav Kobbé [1857-

ALLAN WATER

ON the banks of Allan Water,
 When the sweet spring-time did fall,
 Was the miller's lovely daughter,
 Fairest of them all.

For his bride a soldier sought her,
 And a winning tongue had he,
 On the banks of Allan Water,
 None so gay as she.

On the banks of Allan Water,
 When brown autumn spread his store,
 There I saw the miller's daughter,
 But she smiled no more.

For the summer grief had brought her,
 And the soldier false was he,
 On the banks of Allan Water,
 None so sad as she.

On the banks of Allan Water,
 When the winter snow fell fast,
 Still was seen the miller's daughter,
 Chilling blew the blast.

But the miller's lovely daughter,
 Both from cold and care was free;
 On the banks of Allan Water,
 There a corse lay she.

Matthew Gregory Lewis [1775-1818]

FORSAKEN

O WALY waly up the bank,
 And waly waly down the brae,
 And waly waly yon burn-side
 Where I and my Love wont to gae!

I leaned my back unto an aik,
 I thought it was a trusty tree;
 But first it bowed, and syne it brak,
 Sae my true Love did lichtly me.

O waly waly, but love be bonny
 A little while when it is new;
 But when 'tis auld, it waxeth cauld
 And fades awa' like morning dew.
 O wherefore should I busk my head?
 Or wherefore should I kame my hair?
 For my true Love has me forsook,
 And says he'll never loe me mair.

Now Arthur-seat sall be my bed;
 The sheets shall ne'er be pressed by me:
 Saint Anton's well sall be my drink,
 Since my true Love has forsaken me.
 Martinmas wind, when wilt thou blaw
 And shake the green leaves aff the tree?
 O gentle Death, when wilt thou come?
 For of my life I am wearie.

'Tis not the frost, that freezes fell,
 Nor blawing snaw's inclemencie;
 'Tis not sic cauld that makes me cry,
 But my Love's heart grown cauld to me.
 When we cam in by Glasgow town
 We were a comely sight to see;
 My Love was clad in black velvet.
 And I mysel in cramasie.

But had I wist, before I kissed,
 That love had been sae ill to win;
 I had locked my heart in a case of gowd
 And pinned it with a siller pin.
 And, O! if my young babe were born,
 And sat upon the nurse's knee,
 And I mysel were dead and gane,
 And the green grass growing over me!

Unknown

BONNIE DOON

YE banks and braes o' bonnie Doon,
 How can ye bloom sae fair!
 How can ye chant, ye little birds,
 And I sae fu' o' care!

Thou'll break my heart, thou bonnie bird
 That sings upon the bough;
 Thou minds me o' the happy days
 When my fause Luve was true.

Thou'll break my heart, thou bonnie bird
 That sings beside thy mate;
 For sae I sat, and sae I sang,
 And wist na o' my fate.

Aft hae I roved by bonnie Doon
 To see the woodbine twine,
 And ilka bird sang o' its love;
 And sae did I o' mine.

Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
 Frae aff its thorny tree;
 And my fause luver staw the rose,
 But left the thorn wi' me.

Robert Burns [1759-1796]

THE TWO LOVERS

THE lover of her body said:
 "She is more beautiful than night,—
 But like the kisses of the dead
 Is my despair and my delight."

The lover of her soul replied:
 "She is more wonderful than death,—
 But bitter as the aching tide
 Is all the speech of love she saith."

The lover of her body said:
 "To know one secret of her heart,
 For all the joy that I have had,
 Is past the reach of all my art."

The lover of her soul replied:
 "The secrets of her heart are mine,—
 Save how she lives, a riven bride,
 Between the dust and the divine."

The lover of her body sware:
 "Though she should hate me, wit you well,
 Rather than yield one kiss of her
 I give my soul to burn in hell."

The lover of her soul cried out:
 "Rather than leave her to your greed,
 I would that I were walled about
 With death,—and death were death indeed!"

The lover of her body wept,
 And got no good of all his gain,
 Knowing that in her heart she kept
 The penance of the other's pain.

The lover of her soul went mad,
 But when he did himself to death,
 Despite of all the woe he had,
 He smiled as one who vanquisheth.

Richard Hovey [1864-1900]

THE VAMPIRE

AS SUGGESTED BY THE PAINTING BY PHILIP BURNE-JONES

A FOOL there was and he made his prayer
 (Even as you and I!)
 To a rag and a bone and a hank of hair
 (We called her the woman who did not care),
 But the fool he called her his lady fair
 (Even as you and I!)

*Oh the years we waste and the tears we waste,
 And the work of our head and hand,
 Belong to the woman who did not know
 (And now we know that she never could know)
 And did not understand.*

A fool there was and his goods he spent
 (Even as you and I!)
 Honor and faith and a sure intent
 (And it wasn't the least what the lady meant),
 But a fool must follow his natural bent
 (Even as you and I!)

*Oh the toil we lost and the spoil we lost,
 And the excellent things we planned,
 Belong to the woman who didn't know why
 (And now we know she never knew why)
 And did not understand.*

The fool was stripped to his foolish hide
 (Even as you and I!)
 Which she might have seen when she threw him aside,—
 (But it isn't on record the lady tried)
 So some of him lived but the most of him died—
 (Even as you and I!)

*And it isn't the shame and it isn't the blame
 That stings like a white-hot brand.
 It's coming to know that she never knew why
 (Seeing at last she could never know why)
 And never could understand.*

Rudyard Kipling [1865-]

AGATHA

SHE wanders in the April woods,
 That glisten with the fallen shower;
 She leans her face against the buds,
 She stops, she stoops, she plucks a flower.
 She feels the ferment of the hour:

She broodeth when the ringdove broods;
The sun and flying clouds have power
Upon her cheek and changing moods.

She cannot think she is alone,
As o'er her senses warmly steal
Floods of unrest she fears to own.
And almost dreads to feel.

Along the summer woodlands wide
Anew she roams, no more alone;
The joy she feared is at her side,
Spring's blushing secret now is known.
The primrose and its mates have flown,
The thrush's ringing note hath died;
But glancing eye and glowing tone
Fall on her from her god, her guide.
She knows not, asks not, what the goal,
She only feels she moves towards bliss,
And yields her pure unquestioning soul
To touch and fondling kiss.

And still she haunts those woodland ways,
Though all fond fancy finds there now
To mind of spring or summer days,
Are sodden trunk and songless bough.
The past sits widowed on her brow,
Homeward she wends with wintry gaze,
To walls that house a hollow vow,
To hearth where love hath ceased to blaze:
Watches the clammy twilight wane,
With grief too fixed for woe or tear;
And, with her forehead 'gainst the pane,
Envies the dying year.

Alfred Austin [1835-

"A ROSE WILL FADE"

You were always a dreamer, Rose—red Rose,
As you swung on your perfumed spray,
Swinging, and all the world was true,
Swaying, what did it trouble you?
A rose will fade in a day.

Why did you smile to his face, red Rose,
 As he whistled across your way?
 And all the world went mad for you,
 All the world it knelt to woo.
 A rose will bloom in a day.

I gather your petals, Rose—red Rose,
 The petals he threw away.
 And all the world derided you;
 Ah! the world, how well it knew
 A rose will fade in a day!

Dora Sigerson Shorter [18 -

AFFAIRE D'AMOUR

ONE pale November day
 Flying Summer paused,
 They say:
 And growing bolder,
 O'er rosy shoulder
 Threw her lover such a glance
 That Autumn's heart began to dance.
 (O happy lover!)

A leafless peach-tree bold
 Thought for him she smiled,
 I'm told;
 And, stirred by love,
 His sleeping sap did move,
 Decking each naked branch with green
 To show her that her look was seen!
 (Alas, poor lover!)

But Summer, laughing fled,
 Nor knew he loved her!
 'Tis said
 The peach-tree sighed,
 And soon he gladly died:
 And Autumn, weary of the chase,
 Came on at Winter's sober pace
 (O careless lover!)

Margaret Deland [1857-

THE MAID OF NEIDPATH

O LOVERS' eyes are sharp to see,
And lovers' ears in hearing;
And love, in life's extremity,
Can lend an hour of cheering.
Disease had been in Mary's bower
And slow decay from mourning,
Though now she sits on Neidpath's tower
To watch her Love's returning.

All sunk and dim her eyes so bright,
Her form decayed by pining,
Till through her wasted hand, at night,
You saw the taper shining.
By fits a sultry hectic hue
Across her cheek was flying;
By fits so ashy pale she grew
Her maidens thought her dying.

Yet keenest powers to see and hear
Seemed in her frame residing;
Before the watch-dog pricked his ear
She heard her lover's riding;
Ere scarce a distant form was kenned,
She knew and waved to greet him,
And o'er the battlement did bend,
As on the wing to meet him.

He came—he passed—an heedless gaze
As o'er some stranger glancing;
Her welcome, spoke in faltering phrase,
Lost in his courser's prancing—
The castle-arch, whose hollow tone
Returns each whisper spoken,
Could scarcely catch the feeble moan
Which told her heart was broken.

Walter Scott [1771-1832]

ELENA'S SONG

From "Philip van Artevelde"

QUOTH tongue of neither maid nor wife
 To heart of neither wife nor maid—
 Lead we not here a jolly life
 Betwixt the shine and shade?

Quoth heart of neither maid nor wife
 To tongue of neither wife nor maid—
 Thou wag'st, but I am worn with strife,
 And feel like flowers that fade.

Henry Taylor [1800-1886]

THE WAY OF IT

THE wind is awake, pretty leaves, pretty leaves,
 Heed not what he says; he deceives, he deceives:
 Over and over
 To the lowly clover

He has lisped the same love (and forgotten it, too)
 He will soon be lisping and pledging to you.

The boy is abroad, pretty maid, pretty maid,
 Beware his soft words; I'm afraid, I'm afraid:
 He has said them before
 Times many a score,
 Ay, he died for a dozen ere his beard pricked through,
 And the very same death he will die for you.

The way of the boy is the way of the wind,
 As light as the leaves is dainty maid-kind;
 One to deceive,
 And one to believe—

That is the way of it, year to year;
 But I know you will learn it too late, my dear.

John Vance Cheney [1848-]

“WHEN LOVELY WOMAN STOOPS TO FOLLY”

From “The Vicar of Wakefield”

WHEN lovely woman stoops to folly
And finds too late that men betray,—
What charm can soothe her melancholy,
What art can wash her guilt away?

The only art her guilt to cover,
To hide her shame from every eye,
To give repentance to her lover
And wring his bosom, is—to die.

Oliver Goldsmith [1728-1774]

LOVE AND DEATH

HELEN OF KIRCONNELL

I WISH I were where Helen lies,
Night and day on me she cries;
O that I were where Helen lies,
On fair Kirconnell lea!

Cursed be the heart that thought the thought,
And cursed the hand that fired the shot,
When in my arms burd Helen dropped,
And died to succor me!

O think na ye my heart was sair,
When my Love dropped and spak nae mair!
There did she swoon wi' meikle care,
On fair Kirconnell lea.

As I went down the water side,
None but my foe to be my guide,
None but my foe to be my guide,
On fair Kirconnell lea;

I lighted down my sword to draw,
I hackèd him in pieces sma',
I hackèd him in pieces sma',
For her sake that died for me.

O Helen fair, beyond compare!
I'll mak a garland o' thy hair,
Shall bind my heart for evermair,
Until the day I dee!

O that I were where Helen lies!
Night and day on me she cries;
Out of my bed she bids me rise,
Says, "Haste, and come to me!"

O Helen fair! O Helen chaste!
If I were with thee, I'd be blest,
Where thou lies low and taks thy rest,
On fair Kirconnell lea.

I wish my grave were growing green,
A winding-sheet drawn owre my e'en,
And I in Helen's arms lying,
On fair Kirconnell lea.

I wish I were where Helen lies!
Night and day on me she cries;
And I am weary of the skies,
For her sake that died for me.

Unknown

WILLY DROWNED IN YARROW

“Willy’s rare, and Willy’s fair,
And Willy’s wondrous bonny;
And Willy hecht to marry me,
Gin e’er he married ony.

“Yestreen I made my bed fu’ braid,
This night I’ll make it narrow;
For a’ the livelang winter night
I lie twined of my marrow.

“Oh came you by yon water-side?
Pu’d you the rose or lily?
Or came you by yon meadow green?
Or saw you my sweet Willy?”

She sought him east, she sought him west,
She sought him braid and narrow;
Syne in the cleaving of a craig,
She found him drowned in Yarrow.

Unknown

ANNAN WATER

“ ANNAN Water’s wading deep,
 And my Love Annie’s wondrous bonny;
 And I am laith she should wet her feet,
 Because I love her best of ony.”

He’s loupen on his bonny gray,
 He rade the right gate and the ready;
 For all the storm he wadna stay,
 For seeking of his bonny lady.

And he has ridden o’er field and fell,
 Through moor, and moss, and many a mire;
 His spurs of steel were sair to bide,
 And from her four feet flew the fire.

“ My bonny gray, now play your part!
 If ye be the steed that wins my dearie,
 With corn and hay ye’ll be fed for aye,
 And never spur shall make you wearie.”

The gray was a mare, and a right gude mare;
 But when she wan the Annan Water,
 She could not have ridden the ford that night
 Had a thousand merks been wadded at her.

“ O boatman, boatman, put off your boat,
 Put off your boat for golden money!”
 But for all the gold in fair Scotland,
 He dared not take him through to Annie.

“ Oh, I was sworn so late yestreen,
 Not by a single oath, but mony!
 I’ll cross the drumly stream tonight,
 Or never could I face my honey.”

The side was stey, and the bottom deep,
 From bank to brae the water pouring;
 The bonny gray mare she swat for fear,
 For she heard the water-kelpy roaring.

He spurred her forth into the flood,
I wot she swam both strong and steady;
But the stream was broad, and her strength did fail,
And he never saw his bonny lady!

Unknown

THE LAMENT OF THE BORDER WIDOW

My love he built me a bonnie bower,
And clad it a' wi' lily flower;
A brawer bower ye ne'er did see,
Than my true-love he built for me.

There came a man, by middle day,
He spied his sport, and went away;
And brought the king that very night,
Who brake my bower, and slew my knight.

He slew my knight, to me sae dear;
He slew my knight, and poin'd his gear:
My servants all for life did flee,
And left me in extremitie.

I sewed his sheet, making my mane;
I watched the corpse, mysel alone;
I watched his body night and day;
No living creature came that way.

I took his body on my back,
And whiles I gaed, and whiles I sat;
I digged a grave, and laid him in,
And happed him with the sod sae green.

But think na ye my heart was sair,
When I laid the moul' on his yellow hair?
O, think na ye my heart was wae,
When I turned about, away to gae?

Nae living man I'll love again,
Since that my lovely knight is slain;
Wi' ae lock o' his yellow hair
I'll chain my heart for evermair.

Unknown

ASPATIA'S SONG

From "The Maid's Tragedy"

LAY a garland on my hearse
 Of the dismal yew;
 Maidens, willow branches bear;
 Say, I died true.

My love was false, but I was firm
 From my hour of birth.
 Upon my buried body lie
 Lightly, gentle earth!

John Fletcher [1579-1625]

A BALLAD

From the "What-d'ye-call-it"

'TWAS when the seas were roaring
 With hollow blasts of wind,
 A damsel lay deplored,
 All on a rock reclined.
 Wide o'er the foaming billows
 She cast a wistful look;
 Her head was crowned with willows,
 That trembled o'er the brook.

"Twelve months are gone and over,
 And nine long tedious days;
 Why didst thou, venturous lover,
 Why didst thou trust the seas?
 Cease, cease thou cruel ocean,
 And let my lover rest;
 Ah! what's thy troubled motion
 To that within my breast?

"The merchant robbed of pleasure,
 Sees tempests in despair;
 But what's the loss of treasure,
 To losing of my dear?

Should you some coast be laid on,
 Where gold and diamonds grow,
 You'd find a richer maiden,
 But none that loves you so.

"How can they say that nature
 Has nothing made in vain;
 Why then, beneath the water,
 Should hideous rocks remain?
 No eyes the rocks discover
 That lurk beneath the deep,
 To wreck the wandering lover,
 And leave the maid to weep."

All melancholy lying,
 Thus wailed she for her dear;
 Repaid each blast with sighing,
 Each billow with a tear.
 When, o'er the white wave stooping,
 His floating corpse she spied,
 Then, like a lily drooping,
 She bowed her head, and died.

John Gay [1685-1732]

THE BRAES OF YARROW

THY braes were bonnie, Yarrow stream,
 When first on them I met my lover:
 Thy braes how dreary, Yarrow stream,
 When now thy waves his body cover!
 Forever now, O Yarrow stream!
 Thou art to me a stream of sorrow;
 For never on thy banks shall I
 Behold my love, the flower of Yarrow.

He promised me a milk-white steed,
 To bear me to his father's bowers;
 He promised me a little page,
 To squire me to his father's towers;

He promised me a wedding-ring,—
 The wedding-day was fixed to-morrow;
 Now he is wedded to his grave,
 Alas! his watery grave, in Yarrow.

Sweet were his words when last we met:
 My passion I as freely told him:
 Clasped in his arms, I little thought
 That I should never more behold him!
 Scarce was he gone, I saw his ghost;
 It vanished with a shriek of sorrow;
 Thrice did the water-wraith ascend,
 And gave a doleful groan through Yarrow.

His mother from the window looked,
 With all the longing of a mother;
 His little sister weeping walked
 The greenwood path to meet her brother.
 They sought him east, they sought him west,
 They sought him all the forest thorough;
 They only saw the cloud of night,
 They only heard the roar of Yarrow!

No longer from thy window look,—
 Thou hast no son, thou tender mother!
 No longer walk, thou little maid;
 Alas! thou hast no more a brother.
 No longer seek him east or west,
 And search no more the forest thorough;
 For, wandering in the night so dark,
 He fell a lifeless corse in Yarrow.

The tear shall never leave my cheek,
 No other youth shall be my marrow:
 I'll seek thy body in the stream,
 And then with thee I'll sleep in Yarrow.
 The tear did never leave her cheek,
 No other youth became her marrow;
 She found his body in the stream,
 And now with him she sleeps in Yarrow.

John Logan [1748-1788]

THE ROSE AND THE GAUNTLET

Low spake the knight to the peasant maid,
 "O, be not thus of my suit afraid!
 Fly with me from this garden small,
 And thou shalt sit in my castle hall.

"Thou shalt have pomp and wealth and pleasure,
 Joys beyond thy fancy's measure;
 Here with my sword and horse I stand,
 To bear thee away to my distant land.

"Take, thou fairest! this full-blown rose
 A token of love that as ripely blows."
 With his glove of steel he plucked the token,
 And it fell from the gauntlet crushed and broken.

The maiden exclaimed, "Thou seest, Sir Knight,
 Thy fingers of iron can only smite;
 And, like the rose thou hast torn and scattered,
 I in thy grasp should be wrecked and shattered!"

She trembled and blushed, and her glances fell,
 But she turned from the knight, and said, "Farewell."
 "Not so," he cried, "will I lose my prize;
 I heed not thy words, but I read thine eyes."

He lifted her up in his grasp of steel,
 And he mounted and spurred with fiery heel;
 But her cry drew forth her hoary sire,
 Who snatched his bow from above the fire.

Swift from the valley the warrior fled,
 But swifter the bolt of the cross-bow sped;
 And the weight that pressed on the fleet-foot horse
 Was the living man and the woman's corse.

That morning the rose was bright of hue,
 That morning the maiden was sweet to view;
 But the evening sun its beauty shed
 On the withered leaves and the maiden dead.

John Wilson [1785-1854]

THE MINSTREL'S SONG

From "Ella"

Oh sing unto my roundelay;
 Oh drop the briny tear with me;
Dance no more at holiday;
 Like a running river be!
 My love is dead,
 Gone to his death-bed,
 All under the willow tree!

Black his hair as the winter night,
 White his throat as the summer snow,
Red his cheek as the morning light,
 Cold he lies in the grave below.

Sweet his tongue as the throstle's note;
 Quick in dance as thought can be;
Deft his tabor, cudgel stout,
 Oh, he lies by the willow tree.

Hark! the raven flaps his wing
 In the briery dell below;
Hark! the death-owl loud doth sing,
 To the night-mares as they go.

See! the white moon shines on high;
 Whiter is my true love's shroud;
Whiter than the morning sky,
 Whiter than the evening cloud.

Here, upon my true love's grave,
 Shall the barren flowers be laid;
Not one holy saint to save
 All the coldness of a maid.

With my hands I'll twist the briers
 Round his holy corpse to gre;
Elfin fairy, light your fires,
 Here my body still shall be.

Come, with acorn-cup and thorn,
 Drain my heart's blood away;
 Life and all its good I scorn,
 Dance by night, or feast by day.

Water-witches, crowned with reeds,
 Bear me to your deadly tide.
 I die! I come! my true love waits!—
 Thus the damsel spake, and died.

Thomas Chatterton [1752-1770]

HIGHLAND MARY

YE banks and braes and streams around
 The castle o' Montgomery,
 Green be your woods, and fair your flowers,
 Your waters never drumlie!
 There simmer first unfauld her robes,
 And there the langest tarry;
 For there I took the last fareweel
 O' my sweet Highland Mary.

How sweetly bloomed the gay green birk,
 How rich the hawthorn's blossom,
 As underneath their fragrant shade
 I clasped her to my bosom!
 The golden hours on angel's wings
 Flew o'er me and my dearie;
 For dear to me as light and life
 Was my sweet Highland Mary.

Wi' mony a vow and locked embrace
 Our parting was fu' tender;
 And, pledging aft to meet again,
 We tore oursels asunder;
 But, O! fell Death's untimely frost,
 That nipped my flower sae early!
 Now green's the sod, and cauld's the clay,
 That wraps my Highland Mary!

O pale, pale now, those rosy lips,
 I aft hae kissed sae fondly!
 And closed for aye the sparkling glance
 That dwelt on me sae kindly;
 And moldering now in silent dust
 That heart that lo'ed me dearly!
 But still within my bosom's core
 Shall live my Highland Mary.

Robert Burns [1759-1796]

TO MARY IN HEAVEN

THOU lingering star, with lessening ray,
 That lov'st to greet the early morn,
 Again thou usher'st in the day
 My Mary from my soul was torn.
 O Mary! dear departed shade!
 Where is thy place of blissful rest?
 See'st thou thy lover lowly laid?
 Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?

That sacred hour can I forget,
 Can I forget the hallowed grove,
 Where by the winding Ayr we met,
 To live one day of parting love!
 Eternity will not efface
 Those records dear of transports past;
 Thy image at our last embrace,—
 Ah! little thought we 'twas our last!

Ayr, gurgling, kissed his pebbled shore,
 O'erhung with wild woods, thickening green;
 The fragrant birch, and hawthorn hoar,
 Twined amorous round the raptured scene;
 The flowers sprang wanton to be pressed,
 The birds sang love on every spray,—
 Till soon, too soon, the glowing west
 Proclaimed the speed of wingèd day.

Still o'er these scenes my memory wakes,
And fondly broods with miser care!
Time but the impression stronger makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear.
My Mary! dear departed shade!
Where is thy place of blissful rest?
See'st thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?

Robert Burns [1759-1796]

LUCY

I

STRANGE fits of passion have I known:
And I will dare to tell,
But in the lover's ear alone,
What once to me befell.

When she I loved looked every day
Fresh as a rose in June,
I to her cottage bent my way,
Beneath an evening moon.

Upon the moon I fixed my eye,
All over the wide lea;
With quickening pace my horse drew nigh
Those paths so dear to me.

And now we reached the orchard-plot;
And, as we climbed the hill,
The sinking moon to Lucy's cot
Came near, and nearer still.

In one of those sweet dreams I slept,
Kind Nature's gentlest boon!
And all the while my eyes I kept
On the descending moon.

My horse moved on; hoof after hoof
 He raised, and never stopped:
 When down behind the cottage roof,
 At once, the bright moon dropped.

What fond and wayward thoughts will slide
 Into a lover's head!
 "O mercy!" to myself I cried,
 "If Lucy should be dead!"

II

She dwelt among the untrodden ways
 Beside the springs of Dove,
 A Maid whom there were none to praise
 And very few to love:

A violet by a mossy stone
 Half hidden from the eye!
 Fair as a star, when only one
 Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
 When Lucy ceased to be;
 But she is in her grave, and oh,
 The difference to me!

III

I traveled among unknown men,
 In lands beyond the sea;
 Nor, England! did I know till then
 What love I bore to thee.

'Tis past, that melancholy dream!
 Nor will I quit thy shore
 A second time; for still I seem
 To love thee more and more.

Among thy mountains did I feel
 The joy of my desire;
 And she I cherished turned her wheel
 Beside an English fire.

Thy mornings showed, thy nights concealed,
The bowers where Lucy played;
And thine too is the last green field
That Lucy's eyes surveyed.

IV

Three years she grew in sun and shower;
Then Nature said, "A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown;
This child I to myself will take;
She shall be mine, and I will make
A lady of my own.

"Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse: and with me
The girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.

"She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs;
And hers shall be the breathing balm,
And hers the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.

"The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her; for her the willow bend;
Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the storm
Grace that shall mold the maiden's form
By silent sympathy.

"The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.

"And vital feelings of delight
 Shall rear her form to stately height,
 Her virgin bosom swell;
 Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
 While she and I together live
 Here in this happy dell."

Thus Nature spake—The work was done—
 How soon my Lucy's race was run!
 She died, and left to me
 This heath, this calm and quiet scene;
 The memory of what has been,
 And never more will be.

v

A slumber did my spirit seal;
 I had no human fears:
 She seemed a thing that could not feel
 The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, or force;
 She neither hears nor sees;
 Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,
 With rocks, and stones, and trees.

William Wordsworth [1770-1850]

PROUD MAISIE

From "The Heart of Midlothian"

PROUD Maisie is in the wood,
 Walking so early;
 Sweet Robin sits on the bush,
 Singing so rarely.

"Tell me, thou bonny bird,
 When shall I marry me?"
 —"When six braw gentlemen
 Kirkward shall carry ye."

"Who makes the bridal bed,
Birdie, say truly?"
—"The gray-headed sexton
That delves the grave duly.

"The glow-worm o'er grave and stone
Shall light thee steady;
The owl from the steeple sing
Welcome, proud lady!"

Walter Scott [1771-1832]

SONG

EARL MARCH looked on his dying child,
And, smit with grief to view her—
The youth, he cried, whom I exiled
Shall be restored to woo her.

She's at the window many an hour
His coming to discover;
And he looked up to Ellen's bower
And she looked on her lover—

But ah! so pale, he knew her not,
Though her smile on him was dwelling!
And I am then forgot—forgot?
It broke the heart of Ellen.

In vain he weeps, in vain he sighs,
Her cheek is cold as ashes;
Nor love's own kiss shall wake those eyes
To lift their silken lashes.

Thomas Campbell [1777-1844]

THE MAID'S LAMENT

From "The Examination of Shakespeare"

I LOVED him not; and yet now he is gone
I feel I am alone.
I checked him while he spoke; yet could he speak,
Alas! I would not check.

For reasons not to love him once I sought,
 And wearied all my thought
 To vex myself and him: I now would give
 My love, could he but live
 Who lately lived for me, and when he found
 'Twas vain, in holy ground
 He hid his face amid the shades of death.
 I waste for him my breath
 Who wasted his for me; but mine returns,
 And this lorn bosom burns
 With stifling heat, heaving it up in sleep,
 And waking me to weep
 Tears that had melted his soft heart: for years
 Wept he as bitter tears.
Merciful God! Such was his latest prayer,
 These may she never share!
 Quieter is his breath, his breast more cold,
 Than daisies in the mold,
 Where children spell, athwart the churchyard gate,
 His name and life's brief date.
 Pray for him, gentle souls, whoe'er you be,
 And, oh! pray too for me!

Walter Savage Landor [1775-1864]

“SHE IS FAR FROM THE LAND”

SHE is far from the land where her young hero sleeps,
 And lovers are round her, sighing:
 But coldly she turns from their gaze, and weeps,
 For her heart in his grave is lying.

She sings the wild songs of her dear native plains,
 Every note which he loved awaking;—
 Ah! little they think, who delight in her strains,
 How the heart of the minstrel is breaking.

He had lived for his love, for his country he died,
 They were all that to life had entwined him;
 Nor soon shall the tears of his country be dried,
 Nor long will his love stay behind him.

Oh! make her a grave where the sunbeams rest,
 When they promise a glorious morrow;
 They'll shine o'er her sleep, like a smile from the West,
 From her own loved island of sorrow.

Thomas Moore [1779-1852]

"AT THE MID HOUR OF NIGHT"

At the mid hour of night, when stars are weeping, I fly
 To the lone vale we loved, when life shone warm in thine eye;
 And I think oft, if spirits can steal from the regions of air
 To revisit past scenes of delight, thou wilt come to me
 there,

And tell me our love is remembered even in the sky.

Then I sing the wild song 'twas once such rapture to hear,
 When our voices commingling breathed like one on the ear;
 And, as Echo far off through the vale my sad orison rolls,
 I think, O my love! 'tis thy voice from the Kingdom of
 Souls

Faintly answering still the notes that once were so dear.

Thomas Moore [1779-1852]

A BRIDAL DIRGE

WEAVE no more the marriage chain!
 All unmated is the lover;
 Death has ta'en the place of Pain;
 Love doth call on love in vain:
 Life and years of hope are over!

No more want of marriage bell!
 No more need of bridal favor!
 Where is she to wear them well?
 You beside the lover, tell!
 Gone—with all the love he gave her!

Paler than the stone she lies:
 Colder than the winter's morning!
 Wherefore did she thus despise
 (She with pity in her eyes)
 Mother's care, and lover's warning?

Youth and beauty,—shall they not
 Last beyond a brief to-morrow?
 No: a prayer and then forgot!
 This the truest lover's lot;
 This the sum of human sorrow!

Bryan Waller Procter [1787-1874]

“OH! SNATCHED AWAY IN BEAUTY'S BLOOM”

Oh! snatched away in beauty's bloom,
 On thee shall press no ponderous tomb;
 But on thy turf shall roses rear
 Their leaves, the earliest of the year;
 And the wild cypress wave in tender gloom:

And oft by yon blue gushing stream
 Shall Sorrow lean her drooping head,
 And feed deep thought with many a dream,
 And lingering pause and lightly tread;
 Fond wretch! as if her step disturbed the dead!

Away! we know that tears are vain,
 That Death nor heeds nor hears distress:
 Will this unteach us to complain?
 Or make one mourner weep the less?
 And thou,—who tell'st me to forget,
 Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet.

George Gordon Byron [1788-1824]

TO MARY

If I had thought thou couldst have died,
 I might not weep for thee;
 But I forgot, when by thy side,
 That thou couldst mortal be:
 It never through my mind had passed
 The time would e'er be o'er,
 And I on thee should look my last,
 And thou shouldst smile no more!

And still upon that face I look,
 And think 'twill smile again;
 And still the thought I will not brook,
 That I must look in vain.
 But when I speak—thou dost not say
 What thou ne'er left'st unsaid;
 And now I feel, as well I may,
 Sweet Mary, thou art dead!

If thou wouldest stay, e'en as thou art,
 All cold and all serene,
 I still might press thy silent heart,
 And where thy smiles have been.
 While e'en thy chill, bleak corse I have,
 Thou seemest still mine own;
 But there I lay thee in thy grave,—
 And I am now alone!

I do not think, where'er thou art,
 Thou hast forgotten me;
 And I, perhaps, may soothe this heart
 In thinking, too, of thee;
 Yet there was round thee such a dawn
 Of light ne'er seen before,
 As fancy never could have drawn,
 And never can restore!

Charles Wolfe [1791-1823]

MY HEART AND I

ENOUGH! we're tired, my heart and I.
 We sit beside the headstone thus,
 And wish that name were carved for us.
 The moss reprints more tenderly
 The hard types of the mason's knife,
 As Heaven's sweet life renews earth's life
 With which we're tired, my heart and I.

You see we're tired, my heart and I.
 We dealt with books, we trusted men,
 And in our own blood drenched the pen,

As if such colors could not fly.
We walked too straight for fortune's end,
We loved too true to keep a friend;
At last we're tired, my heart and I.

How tired we feel, my heart and I!
We seem of no use in the world;
Our fancies hang gray and uncurled
About men's eyes indifferently;
Our voice which thrilled you so, will let
You sleep; our tears are only wet:
What do we here, my heart and I?

So tired, so tired, my heart and I!
It was not thus in that old time
When Ralph sat with me 'neath the lime
To watch the sunset from the sky.
"Dear love, you're looking tired," he said:
I, smiling at him, shook my head.
'Tis now we're tired, my heart and I.

So tired, so tired, my heart and I!
Though now none takes me on his arm
To fold me close and kiss me warm
Till each quick breath end in a sigh
Of happy languor. Now, alone,
We lean upon this graveyard stone,
Uncheered, unkissed, my heart and I.

Tired out we are, my heart and I.
Suppose the world brought diadems
To tempt us, crusted with loose gems
Of powers and pleasures? Let it try.
We scarcely care to look at even
A pretty child, or God's blue heaven,
We feel so tired, my heart and I.

Yet who complains? My heart and I?
In this abundant earth no doubt
Is little room for things worn out:

Disdain them, break them, throw them by!

And if before the days grew rough

We *once* were loved, used,—well enough,
I think, we've fared, my heart and I.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806-1861]

ROSALIND'S SCROLL

From "The Poet's Vow"

I LEFT thee last, a child at heart,

A woman scarce in years:

I come to thee, a solemn corpse

Which neither feels nor fears.

I have no breath to use in sighs;

They laid the dead-weights on mine eyes

To seal them safe from tears.

Look on me with thine own calm look:

I meet it calm as thou.

No look of thine can change *this* smile,

Or break thy sinful vow:

I tell thee that my poor scorned heart

Is of thine earth—thine earth, a part:

It cannot vex thee now.

But out, alas! these words are writ

By a living, loving one,

Adown whose cheeks the proofs of life,

The warm quick tears do run:

Ah, let the unloving corpse control

Thy scorn back from the loving soul

Whose place of rest is won.

I have prayed for thee with bursting sob

When passion's course was free;

I have prayed for thee with silent lips

In the anguish none could see;

They whispered oft, "She sleepeth soft"—

But I only prayed for thee.

Go to! I pray for thee no more:
 The corpse's tongue is still;
 Its folded fingers point to heaven,
 But point there stiff and chill:
 No farther wrong, no farther woe
 Hath license from the sin below
 Its tranquil heart to thrill.

I charge thee, by the living's prayer,
 And the dead's silentness,
 To wring from out thy soul a cry
 Which God shall hear and bless!
 Lest Heaven's own palm droop in my hand,
 And pale among the saints I stand,
 A saint companionless.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806-1861]

LAMENT OF THE IRISH EMIGRANT

I'm sittin' on the stile, Mary,
 Where we sat side by side
 On a bright May mornin' long ago,
 When first you were my bride.
 The corn was springin' fresh and green,
 And the lark sang loud and high,
 And the red was on your lip, Mary,
 And the love-light in your eye.

The place is little changed, Mary,
 The day is bright as then,
 The lark's loud song is in my ear,
 And the corn is green again;
 But I miss the soft clasp of your hand,
 And your breath, warm on my cheek:
 And I still keep list'nin' for the words
 You never more will speak.

'Tis but a step down yonder lane,
 And the little church stands near—
 The church where we were wed, Mary;
 I see the spire from here.

But the graveyard lies between, Mary,
And my step might break your rest—
For I've laid you, darling, down to sleep,
With your baby on your breast.

I'm very lonely now, Mary,
For the poor make no new friends;
But, oh! they love the better still
The few our Father sends.
And you were all I had, Mary,
My blessin' and my pride:
There's nothin' left to care for now,
Since my poor Mary died.

Yours was the good, brave heart, Mary,
That still kept hoping on,
When the trust in God had left my soul,
And my arm's young strength was gone;
There was comfort ever on your lip,
And the kind look on your brow—
I bless you, Mary, for that same,
Though you cannot hear me now.

I thank you for the patient smile
When your heart was fit to break,
When the hunger pain was gnawin' there,
And you hid it for my sake;
I bless you for the pleasant word,
When your heart was sad and sore—
Oh! I'm thankful you are gone, Mary,
Where grief can't reach you more!

I'm biddin' you a long farewell,
My Mary—kind and true!
But I'll not forget you, darling,
In the land I'm goin' to:
They say there's bread and work for all,
And the sun shines always there,
But I'll not forget old Ireland,
Were it fifty times as fair!

And often in those grand old woods
 I'll sit, and shut my eyes,
 And my heart will travel back again
 To the place where Mary lies;
 And I'll think I see the little stile
 Where we sat side by side,
 And the springin' corn, and the bright May morn,
 When first you were my bride.

Helen Selina Sheridan [1807-1867]

THE KING OF DENMARK'S RIDE

WORD was brought to the Danish king
 (Hurry!)
 That the love of his heart lay suffering,
 And pined for the comfort his voice would bring;
 (O, ride as though you were flying!)
 Better he loves each golden curl
 On the brow of that Scandinavian girl
 Than his rich crown jewels of ruby and pearl:
 And his rose of the isles is dying!

Thirty nobles saddled with speed;
 (Hurry!)
 Each one mounting a gallant steed
 Which he kept for battle and days of need;
 (O, ride as though you were flying!)
 Spurs were struck in the foaming flank;
 Worn-out chargers staggered and sank;
 Bridles were slackened, and girths were burst;
 But ride as they would, the king rode first,
 For his rose of the isles lay dying!

His nobles are beaten, one by one;
 (Hurry!)
 They have fainted, and faltered, and homeward gone;
 His little fair page now follows alone,
 For strength and for courage trying!
 The king looked back at that faithful child;
 Wan was the face that answering smiled;

They passed the drawbridge with clattering din,
 Then he dropped; and only the king rode in
 Where his rose of the isles lay dying!

The king blew a blast on his bugle horn;
 (Silence!)
 No answer came; but faint and forlorn
 An echo returned on the cold gray morn,
 Like the breath of a spirit sighing.
 The castle portal stood grimly wide;
 None welcomed the king from that weary ride;
 For dead, in the light of the dawning day,
 The pale sweet form of the welcomer lay,
 Who had yearned for his voice while dying!

The panting steed, with a drooping crest,
 Stood weary.
 The king returned from her chamber of rest,
 The thick sobs choking in his breast;
 And, that dumb companion eyeing,
 The tears gushed forth which he strove to check;
 He bowed his head on his charger's neck:
 "O steed, that every nerve didst strain,
 Dear steed, our ride hath been in vain
 To the halls where my love lay dying!"

Caroline Elizabeth Sarah Norton [1808-1870]

MARITÆ SUÆ

I

Of all the flowers rising now,
 Thou only saw'st the head
 Of that unopened drop of snow
 I placed beside thy bed.

In all the blooms that blow so fast,
 Thou hast no further part,
 Save those the hour I saw thee last,
 I laid above thy heart.

Two snowdrops for our boy and girl,
 A primrose blown for me,
 Wreathed with one often-played-with curl
 From each bright head for thee.

And so I graced thee for thy grave,
 And made these tokens fast
 With that old silver heart I gave,
 My first gift—and my last.

II

I dreamed her babe upon her breast,
 Here she might lie and calmly rest
 Her happy eyes on that far hill
 That backs the landscape fresh and still.

I hoped her thoughts would thrid the boughs
 Where careless birds on love carouse,
 And gaze those apple-blossoms through
 To revel in the boundless blue.

But now her faculty of sight
 Is elder sister to the light,
 And travels free and unconfined
 Through dense and rare, through form and mind.

Or else her life to be complete
 Hath found new channels full and meet—
 Then, O, what eyes are leaning o'er,
 If fairer than they were before!

William Philpot [1823-1889]

BALLAD

HE said: "The shadows darken down,
 The night is near at hand.
 Now who's the friend will follow me
 Into the sunless land?"

"For I have vassals leal and true,
And I have comrades kind,
And wheresoe'er my soul shall speed,
They will not stay behind."

He sought the brother young and blithe
Who bore his spear and shield:
"In the long chase you've followed me,
And in the battle-field.

"Few vows you make; but true's your heart,
And you with me will win."
He said: "God speed you, brother mine,
But I am next of kin."

He sought the friar, the gray old priest
Who loved his father's board.
The friar he turned him to the east
And reverently adored.

He said: "A godless name you bear,
A godless life you've led,
And whoso wins along with you,
His spirit shall have dread.

"Oh, hasten, get your guilty soul
From every burden shriven;
Yet you are bound for flame and dole,
But I am bound for heaven."

He sought the lady bright and proud,
Who sate at his right hand:
"Make haste, O Love, to follow me
Into the sunless land."

She said: "And pass you in your prime?
Heaven give me days of cheer!
And keep me from the sunless clime
Many and many a year."

All heavily the sun sank down
 Among black clouds of fate.
 There came a woman fair and wan
 Unto the castle gate.

Through gazing vassals, idle serfs,
 So silently she sped!
 The winding staircase echoed not
 Unto her light, light tread.

His lady eyed her scornfully.
 She stood at his right hand;
 She said: "And I will follow you
 Into the sunless land.

"There is no expiation, none.
 A bitter load I bore:
 Now I shall love you nevermore,
 Never and nevermore.

"There is no touch or tone of yours
 Can make the old love wakc."
 She said: "But I will follow you,
 Even for the old love's sake."

Oh, he has kissed her on the brow,
 He took her by the hand:
 Into the sunless land they went,
 Into the starless land.

May Kendall [1861-]

"O THAT 'TWERE POSSIBLE"

From "Maud"

O THAT 'twere possible
 After long grief and pain
 To find the arms of my true love
 Round me once again!

When I was wont to meet her
In the silent moody places
Of the land that gave me birth,
We stood tranced in long embraces
Mixed with kisses sweeter, sweeter
Than anything on earth.

A shadow flits before me,
Not thou, but like to thee.
Ah, Christ, that it were possible
For one short hour to see
The souls we loved, that they might tell us
What and where they be!

Alfred Tennyson [1809-1892]

"HOME THEY BROUGHT HER WARRIOR DEAD"

From "The Princess"

HOME they brought her warrior dead;
She nor swooned, nor uttered cry.
All her maidens, watching, said,
"She must weep or she will die."

Then they praised him, soft and low,
Called him worthy to be loved,
Truest friend and noblest foe;
Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,
Lightly to the warrior stepped,
Took the face-cloth from the face;
Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,
Set his child upon her knee,—
Like summer tempest came her tears,
"Sweet my child, I live for thee."

Alfred Tennyson [1809-1892]

EVELYN HOPE

BEAUTIFUL Evelyn Hope is dead!
 Sit and watch by her side an hour.
That is her book-shelf, this her bed;
 She plucked that piece of geranium-flower,
Beginning to die too, in the glass.
 Little has yet been changed, I think:
The shutters are shut, no light may pass
 Save two long rays through the hinge's chink.

Sixteen years old when she died!
 Perhaps she had scarcely heard my name;
It was not her time to love; beside,
 Her life had many a hope and aim,
Duties enough and little cares,
 And now was quiet, now astir,
Till God's hand beckoned unawares,—
 And the sweet white brow is all of her.

Is it too late, then, Evelyn Hope?
 What, your soul was pure and true,
The good stars met in your horoscope,
 Made you of spirit, fire, and dew—
And, just because I was thrice as old,
 And our paths in the world diverged so wide,
Each was naught to each, must I be told?
 We were fellow mortals, naught beside?

No, indeed! for God above
 Is great to grant, as mighty to make,
And creates the love to reward the love:
 I claim you still, for my own love's sake!
Delayed, it may be, for more lives yet,
 Through worlds I shall traverse, not a few:
Much is to learn, much to forget
 Ere the time be come for taking you.

But the time will come,—at last it will,
 When, Evelyn Hope, what meant (I shall say)
In the lower earth, in the years long still,
 That body and soul so pure and gay?

Why your hair was amber, I shall divine,
And your mouth of your own geranium's red,—
And what you would do with me, in fine,
In the new life come in the old one's stead.

I have lived (I shall say) so much since then,
Given up myself so many times,
Gained me the gains of various men,
Ransacked the ages, spoiled the climes;
Yet one thing, one, in my soul's full scope,
Either I missed or itself missed me:
And I want and find you, Evelyn Hope!
What is the issue? let us see!

I loved you, Evelyn, all the while!
My heart seemed full as it could hold;
There was place and to spare for the frank young smile,
And the red young mouth, and the hair's young gold.
So, hush,—I will give you this leaf to keep:
See, I shut it inside the sweet, cold hand!
There, that is our secret: go to sleep!
You will wake, and remember, and understand.

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

REMEMBRANCE

COLD in the earth—and the deep snow piled above thee,
Far, far removed, cold in the dreary grave!
Have I forgot, my only Love, to love thee,
Severed at last by Time's all-severing wave?

Now, when alone, do my thoughts no longer hover
Over the mountains, on that northern shore,
Resting their wings where heath and fern-leaves cover
Thy noble heart for ever, ever more?

Cold in the earth—and fifteen wild Decembers,
From those brown hills, have melted into spring:
Faithful, indeed, is the spirit that remembers
After such years of change and suffering!

Sweet Love of youth, forgive, if I forget thee,
 While the world's tide is bearing me along;
 Other desires and other hopes beset me,
 Hopes which obscure, but cannot do thee wrong!

No later light has lightened up my heaven,
 No second morn has ever shone for me;
 All my life's bliss from thy dear life was given,
 All my life's bliss is in the grave with thee.

But, when the days of golden dreams had perished,
 And even Despair was powerless to destroy;
 Then did I learn how existence could be cherished,
 Strengthened, and fed without the aid of joy.

Then did I check the tears of useless passion—
 Weaned my young soul from yearning after thine;
 Sternly denied its burning wish to hasten
 Down to that tomb already more than mine.

And, even yet, I dare not let it languish,
 Dare not indulge in memory's rapturous pain;
 Once drinking deep of that divinest anguish,
 How could I seek the empty world again?

Emily Bronié [1818-1848]

SONG

THE linnet in the rocky dells,
 The moor-lark in the air,
 The bee among the heather bells
 That hide my lady fair:

The wild deer browse above her breast;
 The wild birds raise their brood;
 And they, her smiles of love caressed,
 Have left her solitude.

I ween that, when the grave's dark wall
 Did first her form retain,
 They thought their hearts could ne'er recall
 The light of joy again.

They thought the tide of grief would flow
Unchecked through future years;
But where is all their anguish now,
And where are all their tears?

Well, let them fight for honor's breath,
Or pleasure's shade pursue:
The dweller in the land of death
Is changed and careless too.

And, if their eyes should watch and weep
Till sorrow's source were dry,
She would not, in her tranquil sleep,
Return a single sigh.

Blow, west-wind, by the lonely mound,
And murmur, summer streams!
There is no need of other sound
To soothe my lady's dreams.

Emily Brontë [1818-1848]

SONG OF THE OLD LOVE

From "Supper at the Mill"

WHEN sparrows build, and the leaves break forth,
My old sorrow wakes and cries,
For I know there is dawn in the far, far north,
And a scarlet sun doth rise;
Like a scarlet fleece the snow-field spreads,
And the icy founts run free,
And the bergs begin to bow their heads,
And plunge, and sail in the sea.

O my lost love, and my own, own love,
And my love that loved me so!
Is there never a chink in the world above
Where they listen for words from below?
Nay, I spoke once, and I grieved thee sore,
I remember all that I said,
And now thou wilt hear me no more—no more
Till the sea gives up her dead.

Thou didst set thy foot on the ship, and sail
 To the ice-fields and the snow;
 Thou wert sad, for thy love did naught avail,
 And the end I could not know;
 How could I tell I should love thee to-day,
 Whom that day I held not dear?
 How could I know I should love thee away
 When I did not love thee anear?

We shall walk no more through the sodden plain
 With the faded bents o'erspread,
 We shall stand no more by the seething main
 While the dark wrack drives o'erhead;
 We shall part no more in the wind and the rain,
 Where thy last farewell was said;
 But perhaps I shall meet thee and know thee again
 When the sea gives up her dead.

Jean Ingelow [1820-1897]

REQUIESCAT

STREW on her roses, roses,
 And never a spray of yew!
 In quiet she reposes:
 Ah! would that I did too.

Her mirth the world required:
 She bathed it in smiles of glee.
 But her heart was tired, tired,
 And now they let her be.

Her life was turning, turning,
 In mazes of heat and sound.
 But for peace her soul was yearning,
 And now peace laps her round.

Her cabined, ample Spirit,
 It fluttered and failed for breath.
 To-night it doth inherit
 The vasty hall of Death.

Matthew Arnold [1822-1888]

TOO LATE

"DOWGLAS, DOWGLAS, TENDIR AND TREU"

COULD ye come back to me, Douglas, Douglas,
In the old likeness that I knew,
I would be so faithful, so loving, Douglas,
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true.

Never a scornful word should grieve ye,
I'd smile on ye sweet as the angels do:
Sweet as your smile on me shone ever,
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true.

Oh, to call back the days that are not!
My eyes were blinded, your words were few:
Do you know the truth now, up in heaven,
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true?

I never was worthy of you, Douglas;
Not half worthy the like of you:
Now all men beside seem to me like shadows—
I love you, Douglas, tender and true.

Stretch out your hand to me, Douglas, Douglas,
Drop forgiveness from heaven like dew;
As I lay my heart on your dead heart, Douglas,
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true!

Dinah Maria Mulock Craik [1826-1887]

FOUR YEARS

At the Midsummer, when the hay was down,
Said I mournful—Though my life be in its prime,
Bare lie my meadows all shorn before their time,
O'er my sere woodlands the leaves are turning brown;
It is the hot Midsummer, when the hay is down.

At the Midsummer, when the hay was down,
Stood she by the brooklet, young and very fair,
With the first white bindweed twisted in her hair—
Hair that drooped like birch-boughs, all in her simple gown—
That eve in high Midsummer, when the hay was down.

At the Midsummer, when the hay was down,
 Crept she a willing bride close into my breast;
 Low-piled the thunder-clouds had sunk into the west,
 Red-eyed the sun out-glared like knight from leaguered town;
 It was the high Midsummer, and the sun was down.

It is Midsummer—all the hay is down,
 Close to her forehead press I dying eyes,
 Praying God shield her till we meet in Paradise,
 Bless her in love's name who was my joy and crown,
 And I go at Midsummer, when the hay is down.

Dinah Maria Mulock Craik [1826-1887]

BARBARA

On the Sabbath-day,
 Through the churchyard old and gray,
 Over the crisp and yellow leaves, I held my rustling way;
 And amid the words of mercy, falling on my soul like balms;
 'Mid the gorgeous storms of music—in the mellow organ-
 calms,
 'Mid the upward streaming prayers, and the rich and solemn
 psalms,
 I stood careless, Barbara.

My heart was otherwhere
 While the organ shook the air,
 And the priest, with outspread hands, blessed the people
 with a prayer;
 But, when rising to go homeward, with a mild and saint-like
 shine
 Gleamed a face of airy beauty with its heavenly eyes on
 mine—
 Gleamed and vanished in a moment—O that face was surely
 thine
 Out of heaven, Barbara!

O pallid, pallid face!
 O earnest eyes of grace!
 When last I saw thee, dearest, it was in another place.
 You came running forth to meet me with my love-gift on
 your wrist:

The flutter of a long white dress, then all was lost in mist—
A purple stain of agony was on the mouth I kissed,
That wild morning, Barbara!

I searched in my despair,
Sunny noon and midnight air;
I could not drive away the thought that you were lingering
there.

O many and many a winter night I sat when you were gone,
My worn face buried in my hands, beside the fire alone.
Within the dripping churchyard, the rain plashing on your
stone,

You were sleeping, Barbara.

'Mong angels, do you think
Of the precious golden link

I clasped around your happy arm while sitting by yon
brink?

Or when that night of gliding dance, of laughter and guitars,
Was emptied of its music, and we watched, through lattice-
bars,

The silent midnight heaven creeping o'er us with its stars,
Till the day broke, Barbara?

In the years I've changed;

Wild and far my heart has ranged,

And many sins and errors now have been on me avenged;

But to you I have been faithful, whatsoever good I lacked:

I loved you, and above my life still hangs that love intact—
Your love the trembling rainbow, I the reckless cataract.

Still I love you, Barbara!

Yet, love, I am unblest;

With many doubts oppressed,

I wander like a desert wind, without a place of rest.

Could I but win you for an hour from off that starry shore,
The hunger of my soul were stilled, for Death hath told you
more

Than the melancholy world doth know; things deeper than
all lore

Will you teach me, Barbara?

In vain, in vain, in vain!
You will never come again.

There droops upon the dreary hills a mournful fringe of rain;
The gloaming closes slowly round, loud winds are in the tree,
Round selfish shores for ever moans the hurt and wounded
sea,

There is no rest upon the earth, peace is with Death and thee,
Barbara!

Alexander Smith [1830-1867]

SONG

WHEN I am dead, my dearest,
Sing no sad songs for me;
Plant thou no roses at my head,
Nor shady cypress-tree:
Be the green grass above me
With showers and dewdrops wet;
And if thou wilt, remember,
And if thou wilt, forget.

I shall not see the shadows,
I shall not feel the rain;
I shall not hear the nightingale
Sing on, as if in pain:
And dreaming through the twilight
That doth not rise nor set,
Haply I may remember
And haply may forget.

Christina Georgina Rossetti [1830-1894]

TOO LATE

From "The Prince's Progress"

Too late for love, too late for joy,
Too late, too late!
You loitered on the road too long,
You trifled at the gate.

The enchanted dove upon her branch
 Died without a mate;
The enchanted princess in her tower
 Slept, died, behind the grate;
Her heart was starving all this while
 You made it wait.

Ten years ago, five years ago,
 One year ago,
Even then you had arrived in time,
 Though somewhat slow;
Then you had known her living face
 Which now you cannot know;
The frozen fountain would have leaped,
 The buds gone on to blow,
The warm south wind would have awaked
 To melt the snow.

Is she fair now as she lies?
 Once she was fair;
Meet queen for any kingly king,
 With gold-dust on her hair.
Now there are poppies in her locks,
 White poppies she must wear;
Must wear a veil to shroud her face
 And the want graven there:
Or is the hunger fed at length,
 Cast off the care?

We never saw her with a smile
 Or with a frown;
Her bed seemed never soft to her,
 Though tossed of down;
She little heeded what she wore
 Kirtle, or wreath, or gown;
We think her white brows often ached
 Beneath her crown,
Till silvery hairs showed in her locks
 That used to be so brown.

We never heard her speak in haste:
 Her tones were sweet,
 And modulated just so much
 As it was meet;
 Her heart sat silent through the noise
 And concourse of the street;
 There was no hurry in her hands,
 No hurry in her feet;
 There was no bliss drew nigh to her,
 That she might run to greet.

You should have met her yesterday,
 Wasting upon her bed:
 But wherefore should you weep to-day
 That she is dead?
 Lo, we who love weep not to-day,
 But crown her royal head.
 Let be these poppies that we strew,
 Your roses are too red:
 Let be these poppies, not for you
 Cut down and spread.

Christina Georgina Rossetti [1830-1894]

LINES

In the merry hay-time we raked side by side,
 In the harvest he whispered—Wilt thou be my bride?
 And my girl-heart bounded—Forgive, God, the crime,
 If I loved him more than Thee in the merry hay-time.

In the sad hay-time I sit on the grass,
 The scythe whistles clear, the merry mowers pass;
 But he comes never, for under the lime
 Is a long, low hillock since the last hay-time.

C. J. Paul [18 -

HELEN

THE autumn seems to cry for thee,
 Best lover of the autumn days!
 Each scarlet-tipped and wine-red tree,
 Each russet branch and branch of gold,

Gleams through its veil of shimmering haze,
And seeks thee as they sought of old:
For all the glory of their dress,
They wear a look of wistfulness.

In every wood I see thee stand,
The ruddy boughs above thy head,
And heaped in either slender hand
The frosted white and amber ferns,
The sumach's deep, resplendent red,
Which like a fiery feather burns,
And, over all, thy happy eyes,
Shining as clear as autumn skies.

I hear thy call upon the breeze,
Gay as the dancing wind, and sweet,
And, underneath the radiant trees,
O'er lichens gray and darkling moss,
Follow the trace of those light feet
Which never were at fault or loss,
But, by some forest instinct led,
Knew where to turn and how to tread.

Where art thou, comrade true and tried?
The woodlands call for thee in vain,
And sadly burns the autumn-tide
Before my eyes, made dim and blind
By blurring, puzzling mists of pain.
I look before, I look behind;
Beauty and loss seem everywhere,
And grief and glory fill the air.

Already, in these few short weeks,
A hundred things I leave unsaid,
Because there is no voice that speaks
In answer, and no listening ear,
No one to care now thou art dead!
And month by month, and year by year,
I shall but miss thee more, and go
With half my thought untold, I know.

I do not think thou hast forgot,
 I know that I shall not forget,
 And some day, glad, but wondering not,
 We two shall meet, and, face to face,
 In still, fair fields unseen as yet,
 Shall talk of each old time and place,
 And smile at pain interpreted
 By wisdom learned since we were dead.

Sarah Chauncey Woolsey [1845-1905]

LOVE AND DEATH

IN the wild autumn weather, when the rain was on the sea,
 And the boughs sobbed together, Death came and spake to
 me:
 "Those red drops of thy heart I have come to take from
 thee;
 As the storm sheds the rose, so thy love shall broken be,"
 Said Death to me.

Then I stood straight and fearless while the rain was in the
 wave,
 And I spake low and tearless: "When thou hast made my
 grave,
 Those red drops from my heart then thou shalt surely have;
 But the rose keeps its bloom, as I my love will save
 All for my grave."

In the wild autumn weather a dread sword slipped from its
 sheath;
 While the boughs sobbed together, I fought a fight with
 Death,
 And I vanquished him with prayer, and I vanquished him
 by faith:
 Now the summer air is sweet with the rose's fragrant breath
 That conquered Death.

Rosa Mulholland [18 -

TO ONE IN PARADISE

THOU wast all that to me, love,
For which my soul did pine:
A green isle in the sea, love,
A fountain and a shrine
All wreathed with fairy fruits and flowers,
And all the flowers were mine.

Ah, dream too bright to last!
Ah, starry Hope, that didst arise
But to be overcast!
A voice from out of the Future cries,
“On! on!”—but o'er the Past
(Dim gulf!) my spirit hovering lies
Mute, motionless, aghast.

For, alas! alas! with me
The light of Life is o'er!
No more—no more—no more—
(Such language holds the solemn sea
To the sands upon the shore)
Shall bloom the thunder-blasted tree,
Or the stricken eagle soar.

And all my days are trances,
And all my nightly dreams
Are where thy dark eye glances,
And where thy footstep gleams—
In what ethereal dances,
By what eternal streams.

Edgar Allan Poe [1809-1849]

ANNABEL LEE

It was many and many a year ago,
In a kingdom by the sea,
That a maiden there lived whom you may know
By the name of Annabel Lee;
And this maiden she lived with no other thought
Than to love and be loved by me.

I was a child and she was a child,
In this kingdom by the sea,
But we loved with a love that was more than love,
I and my Annabel Lee;
With a love that the winged seraphs of heaven
Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,
In this kingdom by the sea,
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling
My beautiful Annabel Lee;
So that her highborn kinsmen came
And bore her away from me,
To shut her up in a sepulcher
In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not half so happy in heaven,
Went envying her and me;
Yes! that was the reason (as all men know,
In this kingdom by the sea)
That the wind came out of the cloud by night,
Chilling and killing my Annabel Lee.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love
Of those who were older than we,
Of many far wiser than we;
And neither the angels in heaven above,
Nor the demons down under the sea,
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee:

For the moon never beams, without bringing me dreams
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
Of my darling—my darling—my life and my bride,
In the sepulcher there by the sea,
In her tomb by the sounding sea.

Edgar Allan Poe [1809-1849]

FOR ANNIE

THANK Heaven! the crisis—
The danger is past,
And the lingering illness
Is over at last—
And the fever called “Living”
Is conquered at last.

Sadly, I know
I am shorn of my strength,
And no muscle I move
As I lie at full length:
But no matter—I feel
I am better at length.

And I rest so composedly
Now, in my bed,
That any beholder
Might fancy me dead—
Might start at beholding me,
Thinking me dead.

The moaning and groaning,
The sighing and sobbing,
Are quieted now,
With that horrible throbbing
At heart—ah, that horrible,
Horrible throbbing!

The sickness—the nausea—
The pitiless pain—
Have ceased, with the fever
That maddened my brain—
With the fever called “Living”
That burned in my brain.

And O! of all tortures
That torture the worst
Has abated—the terrible
Torture of thirst

For the naphthaline river
 Of Passion accurst—
I have drunk of a water
 That quenches all thirst,
—Of a water that flows,
 With a lullaby sound,
From a spring but a very few
 Feet under ground—
From a cavern not very far
 Down under ground.

And ah! let it never
 Be foolishly said
That my room it is gloomy,
 And narrow my bed;
For man never slept
 In a different bed—
And, to *sleep*, you must slumber
 In just such a bed.

My tantalized spirit
 Here blandly reposes,
Forgetting, or never
 Regretting, its roses—
Its old agitations
 Of myrtles and roses:
For now, while so quietly
 Lying, it fancies
A holier odor
 About it, of pansies—
A rosemary odor,
 Commingled with pansies—
With rue and the beautiful
 Puritan pansies.

And so it lies happily,
 Bathing in many
A dream of the truth
 And the beauty of Annie—
Drowned in a bath
 Of the tresses of Annie.

She tenderly kissed me,
 She fondly caressed,
And then I fell gently
 To sleep on her breast—
Deeply to sleep
 From the heaven of her breast.

When the light was extinguished,
 She covered me warm,
And she prayed to the angels
 To keep me from harm—
To the queen of the angels
 To shield me from harm.

And I lie so composedly,
 Now, in my bed
(Knowing her love),
 That you fancy me dead—
And I rest so contentedly,
 Now, in my bed
(With her love at my breast),
 That you fancy me dead—
That you shudder to look at me,
 Thinking me dead.

But my heart it is brighter
 Than all of the many
Stars in the sky,
 For it sparkles with Annie—
It glows with the light
 Of the love of my Annie—
With the thought of the light
 Of the eyes of my Annie.

Edgar Allan Poe [1809-1849]

TELLING THE BEES

HERE is the place; right over the hill
 Runs the path I took;
You can see the gap in the old wall still,
 And the stepping-stones in the shallow brook.

There is the house, with the gate red-barred,
And the poplars tall;
And the barn's brown length, and the cattle-yard,
And the white horns tossing above the wall.

There are the beehives ranged in the sun;
And down by the brink
Of the brook are her poor flowers, weed-o'errun,
Pansy and daffodil, rose and pink.

A year has gone, as the tortoise goes,
Heavy and slow;
And the same rose blows, and the same sun glows,
And the same brook sings of a year ago.

There's the same sweet clover-smell in the breeze;
And the June sun warm
Tangles his wings of fire in the trees,
Setting, as then, over Fernside farm.

I mind me how with a lover's care
From my Sunday coat
I brushed off the burrs, and smoothed my hair,
And cooled at the brookside my brow and throat.

Since we parted, a month had passed,—
To love, a year;
Down through the beeches I looked at last
On the little red gate and the well-sweep near.

I can see it all now,—the slantwise rain
Of light through the leaves,
The sundown's blaze on her window-pane,
The bloom of her roses under the eaves.

Just the same as a month before,—
The house and the trees,
The barn's brown gable, the vine by the door,—
Nothing changed but the hives of bees.

Before them, under the garden wall,
Forward and back,
Went drearily singing the chore-girl small,
Draping each hive with a shred of black.

Trembling, I listened: the summer sun
Had the chill of snow;
For I knew she was telling the bees of one
Gone on the journey we all must go!

Then I said to myself, "My Mary weeps
For the dead to-day:
Haply her blind old grandsire sleeps
The fret and the pain of his age away."

But her dog whined low; on the doorway sill
With his cane to his chin,
The old man sat; and the chore-girl still
Sung to the bees stealing out and in.

And the song she was singing ever since
In my ears sounds on:—
"Stay at home, pretty bees, fly not hence!
Mistress Mary is dead and gone!"

John Greenleaf Whittier [1807-1892]

A TRYST

I WILL not break the tryst, my dear,
That we have kept so long,
Though winter and its snows are here,
And I've no heart for song.

You went into the voiceless night;
Your path led far away.
Did you forget me, Heart's Delight,
As night forgets the day?

Sometimes I think that you would speak
If still you held me dear;
But space is vast, and I am weak—
Perchance I do not hear.

Surely, howe'er remote the star
 Your wandering feet may tread,
 When I shall pass the sundering bar
 Our souls must still be wed.

Louise Chandler Moulton [1835-1908]

LOVE'S RESURRECTION DAY

ROUND among the quiet graves,
 When the sun was low,
 Love went grieving,—Love who saves:
 Did the sleepers know?

At his touch the flowers awoke,
 At his tender call
 Birds into sweet singing broke,
 And it did befall

From the blooming, bursting sod
 All Love's dead arose,
 And went flying up to God
 By a way Love knows.

Louise Chandler Moulton [1835-1908]

HEAVEN

ONLY to find Forever, blest
 By thine encircling arm;
 Only to lie beyond unrest
 In passion's dreamy calm!

Only to meet and never part,
 To sleep and never wake,—
 Heart unto heart and soul to soul,
 Dead for each other's sake.

Martha Gilbert Dickinson [18 -

JANETTE'S HAIR

OH, loosen the snood that you wear, Janette,
 Let me tangle a hand in your hair—my pet;

For the world to me had no daintier sight
Than your brown hair veiling your shoulders white;
Your beautiful dark brown hair—my pet.

It was brown with a golden gloss, Janette,
It was finer than silk of the floss—my pet;
'Twas a beautiful mist falling down to your wrist,
'Twas a thing to be braided, and jewelled, and kissed—
'Twas the loveliest hair in the world—my pet.

My arm was the arm of a clown, Janette,
It was sinewy, bristled, and brown—my pet;
But warmly and softly it loved to caress
Your round white neck and your wealth of tress,
Your beautiful plenty of hair—my pet.

Your eyes had a swimming glory, Janette.
Revealing the old, dear story—my pet;
They were gray with that chastened tinge of the sky
When the trout leaps quickest to snap the fly,
And they matched with your golden hair—my pet.

Your lips—but I have no words, Janette—
They were fresh as the twitter of birds—my pet,
When the spring is young, and the roses are wet,
With the dewdrops in each red bosom set,
And they suited your gold brown hair—my pet.

Oh, you tangled my life in your hair, Janette,
'Twas a silken and golden snare—my pet;
But, so gentle the bondage, my soul did implore
The right to continue your slave evermore,
With my fingers enmeshed in your hair—my pet.

Thus ever I dream what you were, Janette,
With your lips, and your eyes, and your hair—my pet,
In the darkness of desolate years I moan,
And my tears fall bitterly over the stone
That covers your golden hair—my pet.

Charles Graham Halpine [1829-1868]

THE DYING LOVER

THE grass that is under me now
 Will soon be over me, Sweet;
 When you walk this way again
 I shall not hear your feet.

You may walk this way again,
 And shed your tears like dew;
 They will be no more to me then
 Than mine are now to you!

Richard Henry Stoddard [1825-1903]

“WHEN THE GRASS SHALL COVER ME”

WHEN the grass shall cover me,
 Head to foot where I am lying;
 When not any wind that blows,
 Summer blooms nor winter snows,
 Shall awake me to your sighing:
 Close above me as you pass,
 You will say, “How kind she was,”
 You will say, “How true she was,”
 When the grass grows over me.

When the grass shall cover me,
 Holden close to earth’s warm bosom,—
 While I laugh, or weep, or sing,
 Nevermore, for anything,
 You will find in blade and blossom,
 Sweet small voices, odorous,
 Tender pleaders in my cause,
 That shall speak me as I was—
 When the grass grows over me.

When the grass shall cover me!
 Ah, belovèd, in my sorrow
 Very patient, I can wait,
 Knowing that, or soon or late,

There will dawn a clearer morrow:
When your heart will moan "Alas!
Now I know how true she was;
Now I know how dear she was"—
When the grass grows over me!

Ina Coolbrith [1844-]

GIVE LOVE TO-DAY

WHEN the lean, gray grasses
Cover me, bury me deep,
No sea wind that passes
Shall break my sleep.

When you come, my lover,
Sorrowful-eyed to me,
Earth mine eyes will cover;
I shall not see.

Though with sad words splendid,
Praising, you call me dear,
It will be all ended;
I shall not hear.

You may live love's riot
Laughingly over my head,
But I shall lie quiet
With the gray dead.

Love, you will not wake me
With all your singing carouse,
Nor your dancing shake me
In my dark house.

Though you should go weeping,
Sorrowful for my sake,
Fain to break my sleeping,
I could not wake.

Now, ere time destroy us—
 Shadows beneath and above;
 Death has no song joyous,
 Nor dead men love—

Now, while deep-eyed, golden,
 Love on the mountain sings,
 Let him be close holden;
 Fetter his wings.

Love, nor joy nor sorrow
 Troubles the end of day.
 Leave the Fates to-morrow;
 Give Love to-day.

Ethel Talbot [18 -

UNTIL DEATH

MAKE me no vows of constancy, dear friend,
 To love me, though I die, thy whole life long,
 And love no other till thy days shall end—
 Nay, it were rash and wrong.

If thou canst love another, be it so;
 I would not reach out of my quiet grave
 To bind thy heart, if it should choose to go—
 Love should not be a slave.

My placid ghost, I trust, will walk serene
 In clearer light than gilds those earthly morns,
 Above the jealousies and envies keen,
 Which sow this life with thorns.

Thou wouldest not feel my shadowy caress;
 If, after death, my soul should linger here;
 Men's hearts crave tangible, close tenderness,
 Love's presence, warm and near.

It would not make me sleep more peacefully
That thou were wasting all thy life in woe
For my poor sake; what love thou hast for me,
Bestow it ere I go.

Carve not upon a stone when I am dead
The praises which remorseful mourners give
To women's graves—a tardy recompense—
But speak them while I live.

Heap not the heavy marble o'er my head
To shut away the sunshine and the dew;
Let small blooms grow there, and let grasses wave,
And raindrops filter through.

Thou wilt meet many fairer and more gay
Than I; but, trust me, thou canst never find
One who will love and serve thee night and day
With a more single mind.

Forget me when I die! The violets
Above my rest will blossom just as blue;
Or miss my tears; e'en nature's self forgets;
But while I live, be true.

Unknown

FLORENCE VANE

I LOVED thee long and dearly,
Florence Vane;
My life's bright dream and early
Hath come again;
I renew in my fond vision,
My heart's dear pain—
My hopes, and thy derision,
Florence Vane.

The ruin, lone and hoary,
The ruin old,
Where thou didst hark my story,
At even told—

That spot—the hues Elysian
 Of sky and plain—
 I treasure in my vision,
 Florence Vane.

Thou wast lovelier than the roses
 In their prime;
 Thy voice excelled the closes
 Of sweetest rhyme;
 Thy heart was as a river
 Without a main.
 Would I had loved thee never,
 Florence Vane!

But, fairest, coldest wonder!
 Thy glorious clay
 Lieth the green sod under—
 Alas, the day!
 And it boots not to remember
 Thy disdain,
 To quicken love's pale ember,
 Florence Vane.

The lilies of the valley
 By young graves weep;
 The daisies love to dally
 Where maidens sleep.
 May their bloom, in beauty vying,
 Never wane
 Where thine earthly part is lying,
 Florence Vane!

Philip Pendleton Cooke [1816-1850]

“IF SPIRITS WALK”

If spirits walk, love, when the night climbs slow
 The slant footpath where we were wont to go,
 Be sure that I shall take the selfsame way
 To the hill-crest, and shoreward, down the gray,
 Sheer, graveled slope, where vetches straggling grow.

Look for me not when gusts of winter blow,
When at thy pane beat hands of sleet and snow;

I would not come thy dear eyes to affray,
If spirits walk.

But when, in June, the pines are whispering low,
And when their breath plays with thy bright hair so
As some one's fingers once were used to play—
That hour when birds leave song, and children pray,
Keep the old tryst, sweetheart, and thou shalt know
If spirits walk.

Sophie Jewett [1861-1909]

REQUIESCAT

TREAD lightly, she is near,
Under the snow;
Speak gently, she can hear
The daisies grow.

All her bright golden hair
Tarnished with rust,
She that was young and fair
Fallen to dust.

Lily-like, white as snow,
She hardly knew
She was a woman, so
Sweetly she grew.

Coffin-board, heavy stone,
Lie on her breast;
I vex my heart alone,
She is at rest.

Peace, peace; she cannot hear
Lyre or sonnet;
All my life's buried here—
Heap earth upon it.

Oscar Wilde [1856-1900]

LYRIC

*Ah, dans ces mornes séjours
Les jamais sont les toujours.*—PAUL VERLAINE

You would have understood me, had you waited;
I could have loved you, dear! as well as he:
Had we not been impatient, dear! and fated
Always to disagree.

What is the use of speech? Silence were fitter:
Lest we should still be wishing things unsaid.
Though all the words we ever spake were bitter,
Shall I reproach you dead?

Nay, let this earth, your portion, likewise cover
All the old anger, setting us apart:
Always, in all, in truth was I your lover;
Always, I held your heart.

I have met other women who were tender,
As you were cold, dear! with a grace as rare.
Think you I turned to them, or made surrender,
I who had found you fair?

Had we been patient, dear! ah, had you waited,
I had fought death for you, better than he:
But from the very first, dear! we were fated
Always to disagree.

Late, late, I come to you, now death discloses
Love that in life was not to be our part:
On your low-lying mound between the roses,
Sadly I cast my heart.

I would not waken you: nay! this is fitter;
Death and the darkness give you unto me;
Here we who loved so, were so cold and bitter,
Hardly can disagree.

Ernest Dowson {1867-1900}

ROMANCE

My Love dwelt in a Northern land.
A gray tower in a forest green
Was hers, and far on either hand
The long wash of the waves was seen,
And leagues and leagues of yellow sand,
The woven forest boughs between!

And through the silver Northern night
The sunset slowly died away,
And herds of strange deer, lily-white,
Stole forth among the branches gray;
About the coming of the light,
They fled like ghosts before the day!

I know not if the forest green
Still girdles round that castle gray;
I know not if the boughs between
The white deer vanish ere the day;
Above my Love the grass is green,
My heart is colder than the clay!

Andrew Lang [1844-1912]

GOOD-NIGHT

GOOD-NIGHT, dear friend! I say good-night to thee
Across the moonbeams, tremulous and white,
Bridging all space between us, it may be.
Lean low, sweet friend; it is the last good-night.

For, lying low upon my couch, and still,
The fever flush evanished from my face,
I heard them whisper softly, " 'Tis His will;
Angels will give her happier resting-place!"

And so from sight of tears that fell like rain,
And sounds of sobbing smothered close and low,
I turned my white face to the window-pane,
To say good-night to thee before I go.

Good-night! good-night! I do not fear the end,
 The conflict with the billows dark and high;
 And yet, if I could touch thy hand, my friend,
 I think it would be easier to die;

If I could feel through all the quiet waves
 Of my deep hair thy tender breath a-thrill,
 I could go downward to the place of graves
 With eyes a-shine and pale lips smiling still;

Or it may be that, if through all the strife
 And pain of parting I should hear thy call,
 I would come singing back to sweet, sweet life,
 And know no mystery of death at all.

It may not be. Good-night, dear friend, good-night!
 And when you see the violets again,
 And hear, through boughs with swollen buds a-white,
 The gentle falling of the April rain,

Remember her whose young life held thy name
 With all things holy, in its outward flight,
 And turn sometimes from busy haunts of men
 To hear again her low good-night! good-night!

Hester A. Benedict [18 -

REQUIESCAT

BURY me deep when I am dead,
 Far from the woods where sweet birds sing;
 Lap me in sullen stone and lead,
 Lest my poor dust should feel the Spring.

Never a flower be near me set,
 Nor starry cup nor slender stem,
 Anemone nor violet,
 Lest my poor dust remember them.

And you—wherever you may fare—
 Dearer than birds, or flowers, or dew—
 Never, ah me, pass never there,
 Lest my poor dust should dream of you.

Rosamund Marriott Watson [1863-

THE FOUR WINDS

Wind of the North,
Wind of the Norland snows,
Wind of the winnowed skies and sharp, clear stars—
Blow cold and keen across the naked hills,
And crisp the lowland pools with crystal films,
And blur the casement-squares with glittering ice,
But go not near my love.

Wind of the West,
Wind of the few, far clouds,
Wind of the gold and crimson sunset lands—
Blow fresh and pure across the peaks and plains,
And broaden the blue spaces of the heavens,
And sway the grasses and the mountain pines,
But let my dear one rest.

Wind of the East,
Wind of the sunrise seas,
Wind of the clinging mists and gray, harsh rains—
Blow moist and chill across the wastes of brine,
And shut the sun out, and the moon and stars,
And lash the boughs against the dripping eaves,
Yet keep thou from my love.

But thou, sweet wind!
Wind of the fragrant South,
Wind from the bowers of jasmíne and of rose!—
Over magnolia glooms and liliéd lakes
And flowering forests come with dewy wings,
And stir the petals at her feet, and kiss
The low mound where she lies.

Charles Henry Lüders [1858-1891]

THE KING'S BALLAD

Good my King, in your garden close,
(Hark to the thrush's trilling)
Why so sad when the maiden rose
Love at your feet is spilling?

Golden the air and honey-sweet,
 Sapphire the sky, it is not meet
 Sorrowful faces should flowers greet,
 (Hark to the thrush's trilling).

All alone walks the King to-day.
 (Hark to the thrush's trilling)
 Far from his throne he steals away
 Loneness and quiet willing.
 Roses and tulips and lilies fair
 Smile for his pleasure everywhere,
 Yet of their joyance he takes no share,
 (Hark to the thrush's trilling).

Ladies wait in the palace, Sire,
 (Hark to the thrush's trilling)
 Red and white for the king's desire,
 Love-warm and sweet and thrilling;
 Breasts of moonshine and hair of night,
 Glances amorous, soft and bright,
 Nothing is lacking for your delight,
 (Hark to the thrush's trilling).

Kneels the King in a grassy place,
 (Hark to the thrush's trilling)
 Little flowers under his face
 With his warm tears are filling.
 Says the King, "Here my heart lies dead
 Where my fair love is burièd,
 Would I were lying here instead!"
 (Hark to the thrush's trilling).

Joyce Kilmer [1886-

HELIOTROPE

AMID the chapel's chequered gloom
 She laughed with Dora and with Flora,
 And chattered in the lecture-room,—
 That saucy little sophomora!

Yet while, as in her other schools,
She was a privileged transgressor,
She never broke the simple rules
Of one particular professor.

But when he spoke of varied lore,
Paroxytones and modes potential,
She listened with a face that wore
A look half fond, half reverential.
To her, that earnest voice was sweet,
And, though her love had no confessor,
Her girlish heart lay at the feet
Of that particular professor.

And he had learned, among his books
That held the lore of ages olden,
To watch those ever-changing looks,
The wistful eyes, the tresses golden,
That stirred his pulse with passion's pain
And thrilled his soul with soft desire,
And bade fond youth return again,
Crowned with its coronet of fire.

Her sunny smile, her winsome ways,
Were more to him than all his knowledge,
And she preferred his words of praise
To all the honors of the college.
Yet "What am foolish I to him?"
She whispered to her heart's confessor.
"She thinks me old and gray and grim,"
In silence pondered the professor.

Yet once when Christmas bells were rung
Above ten thousand solemn churches,
And swelling anthems grandly sung
Pealed through the dim cathedral arches,—
Ere home returning, filled with hope,
Softly she stole by gate and gable,
And a sweet spray of heliotrope
Left on his littered study-table.

Nor came she more from day to day
 Like sunshine through the shadows rifting:
 Above her grave, far, far away,
 The ever-silent snows were drifting;
 And those who mourned her winsome face
 Found in its stead a swift successor
 And loved another in her place—
 All, save the silent old professor.

But, in the tender twilight gray,
 Shut from the sight of carping critic,
 His lonely thoughts would often stray
 From Vedic verse and tongues Semitic,
 Bidding the ghost of vanished hope
 Mock with its past the sad possessor
 Of the dead spray of heliotrope
 That once she gave the old professor.

Harry Thurston Peck [1856-1914]

“LYDIA IS GONE THIS MANY A YEAR”

LYDIA is gone this many a year,
 Yet when the lilacs stir,
 In the old gardens far or near,
 This house is full of her.

They climb the twisted chamber stair;
 Her picture haunts the room;
 On the carved shelf beneath it there,
 They heap the purple bloom.

A ghost so long has Lydia been,
 Her cloak upon the wall,
 Brodered, and gilt, and faded green,
 Seems not her cloak at all.

The book, the box on mantle laid,
 The shells in a pale row,
 Are those of some dim little maid,
 A thousand years ago.

And yet the house is full of her;
She goes and comes again;
And longings thrill, and memories stir,
Like lilacs in the rain.

Out in their yards the neighbors walk,
Among the blossoms tall;
Of Anne, of Phyllis do they talk,
Of Lydia not at all.

Lizette Woodworth Reese [1856-

AFTER

OH, the littles that remain!
Scent of mint out in the lane;
Flare of window, sound of bees;—
These, but these.

Three times sitting down to bread;
One time climbing up to bed;
Table-setting o'er and o'er;
Drying herbs for winter's store;
This thing; that thing;—nothing more.

But just now out in the lane,
Oh, the scent of mint was plain!

Lizette Woodworth Reese [1856-

MEMORIES

OF my ould loves, of their ould ways,
I sit an' think, these bitther days.

(I've kissed—'gainst rason an' 'gainst rhyme—
More mouths than one in my mad time!)

Of their soft ways an' words I dream,
But far off now, in faith, they seem.

Wid betther lives, wid betther men,
They've all long taken up again!

For me an' mine they're past an' done—
Aye, all but one—yes, all but one!

Since I kissed *her* 'neath Tullagh Hill
That one gerrl stays close wid me still.

Och! up to mine her face still lifts,
An' round us still the white May drifts;

An' her soft arm, in some ould way,
Is here beside me, night an' day;

But, faith, 'twas her they buried deep,
Wid all that love she couldn't keep,

Aye, deep an' cold, in Killinkere,
This many a year—this many a year!

Arthur Stringer [1874]

TO DIANE

THE ruddy poppies bend and bow,
Diane! do you remember?
The sun you knew shines proudly now,
The lake still lists the breezes vow,
Your towers are fairer for their stains,
Each stone you smiled upon remains.

Sing low—where is Diane?
Diane! do you remember?

I come to find you through the years,
Diane! do you remember?
For none may rule my love's soft fears.
The ladies now are not your peers,
I seek you through your tarnished halls,
Pale sorrow on my spirit falls,
High, low—where is Diane?
Diane! do you remember?

I crush the poppies where I tread,
Diane! do you remember?
Your flower of life, so bright, so red—
She does not hear—Diane is dead.

I pace the sunny bowers alone
Where naught of her remains but stone.

Sing low—where is Diane?
Diane does not remember.

Helen Hay Whitney [18 -

ASLEEP

HE knelt beside her pillow in the dead watch of the night,
And he heard her gentle breathing, but her face was still and
white,
And on her poor, wan cheek a tear told how the heart can
weep,
And he said, "My love was weary—God bless her! she's
asleep."

He knelt beside her grave-stone in the shuddering autumn
night,
And he heard the dry grass rustle, and his face was thin and
white,
And through his heart the tremor ran of grief that cannot
weep,
And he said, "My love was weary—God bless her! she's
asleep."

William Winter [1836-

HER DWELLING-PLACE

AMID the fairest things that grow
My lady hath her dwelling-place;
Where runnels flow, and frail buds blow
As shy and pallid as her face.

The wild, bright creatures of the wood
About her fearless fit and spring;
To light her dusky solitude
Comes April's earliest offering.

The calm Night from her urn of rest
Pours downward an unbroken stream;
All day upon her mother's breast
My lady lieth in a dream.

Love could not chill her low, soft bed
 With any sad memorial stone;
 He put a red rose at her head—
 A flame as fragrant as his own.

Ada Foster Murray [18 -

THE WIFE FROM FAIRYLAND

HER talk was all of woodland things,
 Of little lives that pass
 Away in one green afternoon,
 Deep in the haunted grass;
 For she had come from fairyland,
 The morning of a day
 When the world that still was April
 Was turning into May.

Green leaves and silence and two eyes—
 'Twas so she seemed to me,
 A silver shadow of the woods,
 Whisper and mystery.

I looked into her woodland eyes,
 And all my heart was hers,
 And then I led her by the hand
 Home up my marble stairs;

And all my granite and my gold
 Was hers for her green eyes,
 And all my sinful heart was hers
 From sunset to sunrise;

I gave her all delight and ease
 That God had given to me,
 I listened to fulfil her dreams,
 Rapt with expectancy.

But all I gave, and all I did,
 Brought but a weary smile
 Of gratitude upon her face;
 As though a little while,

She loitered in magnificence
Of marble and of gold,
And waited to be home again
When the dull tale was told.

Sometimes, in the chill galleries,
Unseen, she deemed, unheard,
I found her dancing like a leaf
And singing like a bird.

So lone a thing I never saw
In lonely earth or sky,
So merry and so sad a thing,
One sad, one laughing, eye.

There came a day when on her heart
A wildwood blossom lay,
And the world that still was April
Was turning into May.

In the green eyes I saw a smile
That turned my heart to stone:
My wife that came from fairyland
No longer was alone.

For there had come a little hand
To show the green way home,
Home through the leaves, home through the dew,
Home through the greenwood—home.

Richard Le Gallienne [1866-]

IN THE FALL O' YEAR

I WENT back an old-time lane
In the fall o' year,
There was wind and bitter rain
And the leaves were sere.

Once the birds were lilting high
In a far-off May—
I remember, you and I
Were as glad as they.

But the branches now are bare
And the lad you knew,
Long ago was buried there—
Long ago, with you!

Thomas S. Jones, Jr. [1882-]

THE ROSARY

THE hours I spent with thee, dear heart,
Are as a string of pearls to me;
I count them over, every one apart,
My rosary.

Each hour a pearl, each pearl a prayer,
To still a heart in absence wrung;
I tell each bead unto the end and there
A cross is hung.

Oh memories that bless—and burn!
Oh barren gain—and bitter loss!
I kiss each bead, and strive at last to learn
To kiss the cross,
Sweetheart,
To kiss the cross.
Robert Cameron Rogers [1862-1912]

LOVE'S FULFILMENT

"MY TRUE-LOVE HATH MY HEART"

From the "Arcadia"

My true-love hath my heart, and I have his,
By just exchange one for the other given:
I hold his dear, and mine he cannot miss;
There never was a better bargain driven:
His heart in me keeps him and me in one,
My heart in him his thoughts and senses guides:
He loves my heart, for once it was his own,
I cherish his, because in me it bides.

His heart his wound receivèd from my sight;
My heart was wounded from his wounded heart;
For as from me, on him his hurt did light,
So still me thought in me his heart did smart:
Both equal hurt, in this change sought our bliss,
My true love hath my heart, and I have his.

Philip Sidney [1554-1586]

SONG

O SWEET delight, O more than human bliss,
With her to live that ever loving is!
To hear her speak whose words are so well placed
That she by them, as they in her are graced:
Those looks to view that feast the viewer's eye,
How blest is he that may so live and die!

Such love as this the Golden Times did know,
When all did reap, yet none took care to sow;
Such love as this an endless summer makes,
And all distaste from frail affection takes.
So loved, so blest, in my beloved am I:
Which till their eyes ache, let iron men envy!

Thomas Campion [? -1619]

THE GOOD-MORROW

I WONDER, by my troth, what thou and I
 Did, till we loved? were we not weaned till then?
 But sucked on country pleasures, childishly?
 Or snored we in the Seven Sleepers' den?
 'Twas so; but this, all pleasures fancies be;
 If ever any beauty I did see,
 Which I desired, and got, 'twas but a dream of thee.

And now good-morrow to our waking souls,
 Which watch not one another out of fear;
 For love all love of other sights controls,
 And makes one little room an everywhere.
 Let sea-discoverers to new worlds have gone;
 Let maps to other, worlds on worlds have shown,
 Let us possess one world; each hath one, and is one.

My face in thine eye, thine in mine appears,
 And true plain hearts do in the faces rest;
 Where can we find two fitter hemispheres
 Without sharp north, without declining west?
 Whatever dies, was not mixed equally;
 If our two loves be one, or thou and I
 Love just alike in all, none of these loves can die.

John Donne [1573-1631]

“THERE'S GOWD IN THE BREAST”

THERE's gowd in the breast of the primrose pale,
 An' siller in every blossom;
 There's riches galore in the breeze of the vale,
 And health in the wild wood's bosom.
 Then come, my love, at the hour of joy,
 When warbling birds sing o'er us;
 Sweet nature for us has no alloy,
 And the world is all before us.

The courtier joys in bustle and power,
 The soldier in war-steeds bounding,
 The miser in hoards of treasured ore,
 The proud in their pomp surrounding:

But we hae yon heaven sae bonnie and blue,
 And laverocks skimming o'er us;
 The breezes of health, and the valleys of dew—
 Oh, the world is all before us!

James Hogg [1770-1835]

THE BEGGAR MAID

HER arms across her breast she laid;
 She was more fair than words can say:
 Bare-footed came the beggar maid
 Before the king Cophetua.
 In robe and crown the king stepped down,
 To meet and greet her on her way;
 "It is no wonder," said the lords,
 "She is more beautiful than day."

As shines the moon in clouded skies,
 She in her poor attire was seen:
 One praised her ankles, one her eyes,
 One her dark hair and lovesome mien.
 So sweet a face, such angel grace,
 In all that land had never been:
 Cophetua sware a royal oath:
 "This beggar maid shall be my queen!"

Alfred Tennyson [1809-1892]

REFLECTIONS

LOOKING OVER A GATE AT A POOL IN A FIELD

I

WHAT change has made the pastures sweet,
 And reached the daisies at my feet,
 And cloud that wears a golden hem?
 This lovely world, the hills, the sward,—
 They all look fresh, as if our Lord
 But yesterday had finished them.

And here's the field with light aglow:
 How fresh its boundary lime-trees show,

And how its wet leaves trembling shine!
 Between their trunks come through to me
 The morning sparkles of the sea,
 Below the level browsing line.

I see the pool, more clear by half
 Than pools where other waters laugh
 Up at the breasts of coot and rail.
 There, as she passed it on her way,
 I saw reflected yesterday
 A maiden with a milking-pail.

There, neither slowly nor in haste,—
 One hand upon her slender waist,
 The other lifted to her pail,—
 She, rosy in the morning light,
 Among the water-daisies white,
 Like some fair sloop appeared to sail.

Against her ankles as she trod
 The lucky buttercups did nod:
 I leaned upon the gate to see.
 The sweet thing looked, but did not speak;
 A dimple came in either cheek,
 And all my heart was gone from me.

Then, as I lingered on the gate,
 And she came up like coming fate,
 I saw my picture in her eyes,—
 Clear dancing eyes, more black than sloes,
 Cheeks like the mountain pink, that grows
 Among white-headed majesties!

I said, "A tale was made of old
 That I would fain to thee unfold.
 Ah! let me,—let me tell the tale."
 But high she held her comely head:
 "I cannot heed it now," she said,
 "For carrying of the milking-pail."

She laughed: What good to make ado?
I held the gate, and she came through,
 And took her homeward path anon.
From the clear pool her face had fled;
It rested on my heart instead,
 Reflected when the maid was gone.

With happy youth, and work content,
So sweet and stately, on she went,
 Right careless of the untold tale.
Each step she took I loved her more,
And followed to her dairy door
 The maiden with the milking-pail.

II

For hearts where wakened love doth lurk,
How fine, how blest a thing is work!
For work does good when reasons fail,—
Good; yet the ax at every stroke
The echo of a name awoke,—
 Her name is Mary Martindale.

I'm glad that echo was not heard
Aright by other men. A bird
 Knows doubtless what his own notes tell;
And I know not,—but I can say
I felt as shamefaced all that day
 As if folks heard her name right well.

And when the west began to glow
I went—I could not choose but go—
 To that same dairy on the hill;
And while sweet Mary moved about
Within, I came to her without,
 And leaned upon the window-sill.

The garden border where I stood
Was sweet with pinks and southernwood.
I spoke,—her answer seemed to fail.

I smelt the pinks,—I could not see.
 The dusk came down and sheltered me,
 And in the dusk she heard my tale.

And what is left that I should tell?
 I begged a kiss,—I pleaded well:
 The rosebud lips did long decline;
 But yet, I think—I think 'tis true—
 That, leaned at last into the dew,
 One little instant they were mine!

O life! how dear thou hast become!
 She laughed at dawn, and I was dumb!
 But evening counsels best prevail.
 Fair shine the blue that o'er her spreads,
 Green be the pastures where she treads,
 The maiden with the milking-pail!

Jean Ingelow [1820-1897]

“ONE MORNING, OH! SO EARLY”

ONE morning, oh! so early, my belovèd, my belovèd,
 All the birds were singing blithely, as if never they would
 cease;
 'Twas a thrush sang in my garden, “Hear the story, hear the
 story!”
 And the lark sang, “Give us glory!”
 And the dove said, “Give us peace!”

Then I hearkened, oh! so early, my belovèd, my belovèd,
 To that murmur from the woodland of the dove, my dear,
 the dove;
 When the nightingale came after, “Give us fame to sweeten
 duty!”
 When the wren sang, “Give us beauty!”
 She made answer, “Give us love!”

Sweet is spring, and sweet the morning, my belovèd, my
 belovèd;
 Now for us doth spring, doth morning, wait upon the year's
 increase,

May Margaret

||||

And my prayer goes up, "Oh, give us, crowned in youth with
marriage glory,

Give for all our life's dear story,
Give us love, and give us peace!"

Jean Ingelow [1820-1897]

A BIRTHDAY

My heart is like a singing bird
Whose nest is in a watered shoot;
My heart is like an apple-tree
Whose boughs are bent with thick-set fruit;
My heart is like a rainbow shell
That paddles in a halcyon sea;
My heart is gladder than all these,
Because my love is come to me.

Raise me a dais of silk and down;
Hang it with vair and purple dyes;
Carve it in doves and pomegranates,
And peacocks with a hundred eyes;
Work it in gold and silver grapes,
In leaves and silver fleurs-de-lys;
Because the birthday of my life
Is come, my love is come to me.

Christina Georgina Rossetti [1830-1894]

MAY MARGARET

If you be that May Margaret
That lived on Kendal Green,
Then where's that sunny hair of yours
That crowned you like a queen?
That sunny hair is dim, lad,
They said was like a crown—
The red gold turned to gray, lad,
The night a ship went down.

If you be yet May Margaret,
May Margaret now as then,
Then where's that bonny smile of yours
That broke the hearts of men?

The bonny smile is wan, lad,
 That once was glad as day—
 And oh! 'tis weary smiling
 To keep the tears away.

If you be that May Margaret,
 As yet you swear to me,
 Then where's that proud, cold heart of yours
 That sent your love to sea?
 Ah, me! that heart is broken,
 The proud, cold heart has bled
 For one light word outspoken,
 For all the love unsaid.

Then Margaret, my Margaret,
 If all you say be true,
 Your hair is yet the sunniest gold,
 Your eyes the sweetest blue.
 And dearer yet and fairer yet
 For all the coming years—
 The fairer for the waiting,
 The dearer for the tears!

Théophile Marzials [1850]

RONDEL

KISSING her hair, I sat against her feet,
 Wove and unwove it, wound and found it sweet;
 Made fast therewith her hands, drew down her eyes,
 Deep as deep flowers and dreamy like dim skies;
 With her own tresses bound and found her fair,
 Kissing her hair.

Sleep were no sweeter than her face to me,
 Sleep of cold sea-bloom under the cold sea;
 What pain could get between my face and hers?
 What new sweet thing would love not relish worse?
 Unless, perhaps, white death had kissed me there,
 Kissing her hair.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837-1909]

"I LOVE MY LOVE"

WHAT is the meaning of the song
 That rings so clear and loud,
 Thou nightingale amid the copse,
 Thou lark above the cloud?
 What says thy song, thou joyous thrush,
 Up in the walnut-tree?
 "I love my Love, because I know
 My Love loves me."

What is the meaning of thy thought,
 O maiden fair and young?
 There is such pleasure in thine eyes,
 Such music on thy tongue;
 There is such glory on thy face—
 What can the meaning be?
 "I love my Love, because I know
 My Love loves me."

O happy words! at Beauty's feet
 We sing them ere our prime;
 And when the early summers pass,
 And Care comes on with Time,
 Still be it ours, in Care's despite,
 To join the chorus free—
 "I love my Love, because I know,
 My Love loves me."

Charles Mackay [1814-1889]

THE BROOKSIDE

I WANDERED by the brookside,
 I wandered by the mill;
 I could not hear the brook flow,—
 The noisy wheel was still;
 There was no burr of grasshopper,
 No chirp of any bird,
 But the beating of my own heart
 Was all the sound I heard.

I sat beneath the elm-tree;
 I watched the long, long shade,
 And, as it grew still longer,
 I did not feel afraid;
 For I listened for a footfall,
 I listened for a word,—
 But the beating of my own heart
 Was all the sound I heard.

He came not,—no, he came not,—
 The night came on alone,—
 The little stars sat, one by one,
 Each on his golden throne;
 The evening wind passed by my cheek,
 The leaves above were stirred,—
 But the beating of my own heart
 Was all the sound I heard.

Fast silent tears were flowing,
 When something stood behind;
 A hand was on my shoulder,—
 I knew its touch was kind:
 It drew me nearer,—nearer,—
 We did not speak one word,
 For the beating of our own hearts
 Was all the sound we heard.

Richard Monckton Milnes [1809–1885]

THE WORLD IS MINE

FOR me the jasmine buds unfold
 And silver daisies star the lea,
 The crocus hoards the sunset gold,
 And the wild rose breathes for me.

I feel the sap through the bough returning,
 I share the skylark's transport fine,
 I know the fountain's wayward yearning;
 I love, and the world is mine!

I love, and thoughts that sometime grieved,
Still well remembered, grieve not me;
From all that darkened and deceived
Upsoars my spirit free.
For soft the hours repeat one story,
Sings the sea one strain divine,
My clouds arise all flushed with glory;
I love, and the world is mine!

Florence Earle Coates [1850-]

WHAT MY LOVER SAID

By the merest chance, in the twilight gloom,
In the orchard path he met me;
In the tall, wet grass, with its faint perfume,
And I tried to pass, but he made no room,
Oh, I tried, but he would not let me.
So I stood and blushed till the grass grew red,
With my face bent down above it,
While he took my hand as he whispering said—
(How the clover lifted each pink, sweet head,
To listen to all that my lover said;
Oh, the clover in bloom, I love it!)

In the high, wet grass went the path to hide,
And the low, wet leaves hung over;
But I could not pass upon either side,
For I found myself, when I vainly tried,
In the arms of my steadfast lover.
And he held me there and he raised my head,
While he closed the path before me,
And he looked down into my eyes and said—
(How the leaves bent down from the boughs o'erhead
To listen to all that my lover said,
Oh, the leaves hanging lowly o'er me!)

Had he moved aside but a little way,
I could surely then have passed him;
And he knew I never could wish to stay,
And would not have heard what he had to say,

Could I only aside have cast him.
 It was almost dark, and the moments sped,
 And the searching night wind found us,
 But he drew me nearer and softly said—
 (How the pure, sweet wind grew still, instead,
 To listen to all that my lover said;
 Oh, the whispering wind around us!)

I am sure he knew when he held me fast,
 That I must be all unwilling;
 For I tried to go, and I would have passed,
 As the night was come with its dew, at last,
 And the sky with its stars was filling.
 But he clasped me close when I would have fled,
 And he made me hear his story,
 And his soul came out from his lips and said—
 (How the stars crept out where the white moon led,
 To listen to all that my lover said;
 Oh, the moon and the stars in glory!)

I know that the grass and the leaves will not tell,
 And I'm sure that the wind, precious rover,
 Will carry my secret so safely and well
 That no being shall ever discover
 One word of the many that rapidly fell
 From the soul-speaking lips of my lover;
 And the moon and the stars that looked over
 Shall never reveal what a fairy-like spell
 They wove round about us that night in the dell,
 In the path through the dew-laden clover,
 Nor echo the whispers that made my heart swell
 As they fell from the lips of my lover.

Homer Greene [1853-

MAY-MUSIC

OH! lose the winter from thine heart, the darkness from thine eyes,
 And from the low hearth-chair of dreams, my Love-o'-
 May, arise;

And let the maidens robe thee like a white white-lilac tree,
Oh! hear the call of Spring, fair Soul,—and wilt thou
come with me?

Even so, and even so!
Whither thou goest, I will go.
I will follow thee.

Then wilt thou see the orange trees star-flowering over Spain,
Or arched and mounded Kaiser-towns that molder mid
Almain,
Or through the cypress-gardens go of magic Italy?
Oh! East or West or South or North, say, wilt thou come
with me?

Even so, or even so!
Whither thou goest, I will go.
I will follow thee.

But wilt thou farther come with me through hawthorn red
and white
Until we find the wall that hides the Land of Heart's Delight?
The gates all carved with olden things are strange and
dread to see:
But I will lift thee through, fair Soul. Arise and come with
me!

Even so, Love, even so!
Whither thou goest, I will go!
Lo, I follow thee.

Rachel Annand Taylor [18 -

SONG

FLAME at the core of the world,
And flame in the red rose-tree;
The one is the fire of the ancient spheres,
The other is Junes to be;
And, oh, there's a flame that is both their flames
Here at the heart of me!

As strong as the fires of stars,
 As the prophet rose-tree true,
 The fire of my life is tender and wild,
 Its beauty is old and new;
 For out of the infinite past it came
 With the love in the eyes of you!

Arthur Upson [1877-1908]

A MEMORY

THE Night walked down the sky
 With the moon in her hand;
 By the light of that yellow lantern
 I saw you stand.

The hair that swept your shoulders
 Was yellow, too,
 Your feet as they touched the grasses
 Shamed the dew.

The Night wore all her jewels,
 And you wore none,
 But your gown had the odor of lilies
 Drenched with sun.

And never was Eve of the Garden
 Or Mary the Maid
 More pure than you as you stood there
 Bold, yet afraid.

And the sleeping birds woke, trembling,
 And the folded flowers were aware,
 And my senses were faint with the fragrant
 Gold of your hair.

And our lips found ways of speaking
 What words cannot say,
 Till a hundred nests gave music,
 And the East was gray.

Fredric Lawrence Knowles [1869-1905]

LOVE TRIUMPHANT

HELEN's lips are drifting dust;
Ilion is consumed with rust;
All the galleons of Greece
Drink the ocean's dreamless peace;
Lost was Solomon's purple show
Restless centuries ago;
Stately empires wax and wane—
Babylon, Barbary, and Spain;—
Only one thing, undefaced,
Lasts, though all the worlds lie waste
And the heavens are overturned.
—Dear, how long ago we learned!

There's a sight that blinds the sun,
Sound that lives when sounds are done,
Music that rebukes the birds,
Language lovelier than words,
Hue and scent that shame the rose,
Wine no earthly vineyard knows,
Silence stiller than the shore
Swept by Charon's stealthy oar,
Ocean more divinely free
Than Pacific's boundless sea,—
Ye who love have learned it true.
—Dear, how long ago we knew!

Frederic Lawrence Knowles [1869-1905]

LINES

LOVE within the lover's breast
Burns like Hesper in the West,
O'er the ashes of the sun,
Till the day and night are done;
Then, when dawn drives up his car—
Lo! it is the morning star.

Love! thy love pours down on mine,
As the sunlight on the vine,

As the snow rill on the vale,
 As the salt breeze on the sail;
 As the song unto the bird
 On my lips thy name is heard.

As a dewdrop on the rose
 In thy heart my passion glows;
 As a skylark to the sky,
 Up into thy breast I fly;
 As a sea-shell of the sea
 Ever shall I sing of thee.

George Meredith [1828-1900]

LOVE AMONG THE RUINS

WHERE the quiet-colored end of evening smiles
 Miles and miles
 On the solitary pastures where our sheep
 Half-asleep
 Tinkle homeward through the twilight, stray or stop
 As they crop—
 Was the site once of a city great and gay,
 (So they say)
 Of our country's very capital, its prince
 Ages since
 Held his court in, gathered councils, wielding far
 Peace or war.

Now,—the country does not even boast a tree,
 As you see,
 To distinguish slopes of verdure, certain rills
 From the hills
 Intersect and give a name to (else they run
 Into one),
 Where the domed and daring palace shot its spires
 Up like fires
 O'er the hundred-gated circuit of a wall
 Bounding all,
 Made of marble, men might march on nor be pressed,
 Twelve abreast.

And such plenty and perfection, see, of grass
Never was!

Such a carpet as, this summer-time, o'erspreads
And embeds

Every vestige of the city, guessed alone,
Stock or stone—

Where a multitude of men breathed joy and woe
Long ago;

Lust of glory pricked their hearts up, dread of shame
Struck them tame;

And that glory and that shame alike, the gold
Bought and sold.

Now,—the single little turret that remains
On the plains,

By the caper overrooted, by the gourd
Overscored,

While the patching houseleek's head of blossom winks
Through the chinks—

Marks the basement whence a tower in ancient time
Sprang sublime,

And a burning ring, all round, the chariots traced
As they raced,

And the monarch and his minions and his dames
Viewed the games.

And I know, while thus the quiet-colored eve
Smiles to leave

To their folding, all our many-tinkling fleece
In such peace,

And the slopes and rills in undistinguished gray
Melt away—

That a girl with eager eyes and yellow hair
Waits me there

In the turret whence the charioteers caught soul
For the goal,

When the king looked, where she looks now, breathless, dumb,
Till I come.

But he looked upon the city, every side,
Far and wide,

All the mountains topped with temples, all the glades'
 Colonnades,
 All the causeys, bridges, aqueducts,—and then,
 All the men!
 When I do come, she will speak not, she will stand,
 Either hand
 On my shoulder, give her eyes the first embrace
 Of my face,
 Ere we rush, ere we extinguish sight and speech
 Each on each.

In one year they sent a million fighters forth
 South and North,
 And they built their gods a brazen pillar high
 As the sky,
 Yet reserved a thousand chariots in full force—
 Gold, of course.
 Oh heart! oh blood that freezes, blood that burns!
 Earth's returns
 For whole centuries of folly, noise and sin!
 Shut them in,
 With their triumphs and their glories and the rest!
 Love is best!

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

EARL MERTOUN'S SONG

From "The Blot in the 'Scutcheon'"

THERE'S a woman like a dewdrop, she's so purer than the purest;
 And her noble heart's the noblest, yes, and her sure faith's the surest:
 And her eyes are dark and humid, like the depth on depth of luster
 Hid i' the harebell, while her tresses, sunnier than the wild-grape cluster,
 Gush in golden-tinted plenty down her neck's rose-misted marble:
 Then her voice's music . . . call it the well's bubbling, the bird's warble!

And this woman says, "My days were sunless and my nights
were moonless,
Parched the pleasant April herbage, and the lark's heart's
outbreak tuneless,
If you loved me not!" And I who (ah, for words of flame!)
adore her,
Who am mad to lay my spirit prostrate palpably before
her—
I may enter at her portal soon, as now her lattice takes
me,
And by noontide as by midnight make her mine, as hers she
makes me!

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

MEETING AT NIGHT

THE gray sea and the long black land;
And the yellow half-moon large and low;
And the startled little waves that leap
In fiery ringlets from their sleep,
As I gain the cove with pushing prow,
And quench its speed in the slushy sand.

Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach;
Three fields to cross till a farm appears;
A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch
And blue spirt of a lighted match,
And a voice less loud, through its joys and fears,
Than the two hearts beating each to each!

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

PARTING AT MORNING

ROUND the cape of a sudden came the sea,
And the sun looked over the mountain's rim:
And straight was a path of gold for him,
And the need of a world of men for me.

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

THE TURN OF THE ROAD

Soft, gray buds on the willow,
 Warm, moist winds from the bay,
 Sea-gulls out on the sandy beach,
 And a road my eager feet would reach,
 That leads to the Far-away.

Dust on the wayside flower,
 The meadow-lark's luring tone
 Is silent now, from the grasses tipped
 With dew at the dawn, the pearls have slipped—
 Far have I fared alone.

And then, by the alder thicket
 The turn of the road—and *you!*
 Though the earth lie white in the noonday heat,
 Or the swift storm follow our hurrying feet
 What do we care—we two!

Alice Rollit Coe [18 -

“MY DELIGHT AND THY DELIGHT”

My delight and thy delight
 Walking, like two angels white,
 In the gardens of the night:

My desire and thy desire
 Twining to a tongue of fire,
 Leaping live, and laughing higher;

Through the everlasting strife
 In the mystery of life.

Love, from whom the world begun,
 Hath the secret of the sun.

Love can tell, and love alone,
 Whence the million stars were strown,
 Why each atom knows its own,
 How, in spite of woe and death,
 Gay is life, and sweet is breath:

This he taught us, this we knew,
 Happy in his science true,
 Hand in hand as we stood
 'Neath the shadows of the wood,
 Heart to heart as we lay
 In the dawning of the day.

Robert Bridges [1844-]

"O, SAW YE THE LASS"

O, SAW ye the lass wi' the bonny blue een?
 Her smile is the sweetest that ever was seen;
 Her cheek like the rose is, but fresher, I ween;
 She's the loveliest lassie that trips on the green.
 The home of my love is below in the valley,
 Where wild-flowers welcome the wandering bee;
 But the sweetest of flowers in that spot that is seen
 Is the maid that I love wi' the bonny blue een.

When night overshadows her cot in the glen,
 She'll steal out to meet her loved Donald again;
 And when the moon shines on the valley so green,
 I'll welcome the lass wi' the bonny blue een.
 As the dove that has wandered away from his nest
 Returns to the mate his fond heart loves the best,
 I'll fly from the world's false and vanishing scene,
 To my dear one, the lass wi' the bonny blue een.

Richard Ryan [1796-1849]

LOVE AT SEA

IMITATED FROM THÉOPHILE GAUTIER

WE are in love's land to-day;
 Where shall we go?
 Love, shall we start or stay,
 Or sail or row?
 There's many a wind and way,
 And never a May but May;
 We are in love's hand to-day;
 Where shall we go?

Our land-wind is the breath
 Of sorrows kissed to death
 And joys that were;
 Our ballast is a rose;
 Our way lies where God knows
 And love knows where.
 We are in love's hand to-day—

Our seamen are fledged Loves,
 Our masts are bills of doves,
 Our decks fine gold;
 Our ropes are dead maids' hair,
 Our stores are love-shafts fair
 And manifold.
 We are in love's land to-day—

Where shall we land you, sweet?
 On fields of strange men's feet,
 Or fields near home?
 Or where the fire-flowers blow,
 Or where the flowers of snow
 Or flowers of foam?
 We are in love's hand to-day—

Land me, she says, where love
 Shows but one shaft, one dove,
 One heart, one hand,—
 A shore like that, my dear,
 Lies where no man will steer,
 No maiden land.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837-1909]

MARY BEATON'S SONG

From "Chastelard"

BETWEEN the sunset and the sea
 My love laid hands and lips on me;
 Of sweet came sour, of day came night,
 Of long desire came brief delight:
 Ah love, and what thing came of thee
 Between the sea-downs and the sea?

Between the sea-mark and the sea
Joy grew to grief, grief grew to me;
Love turned to tears, and tears to fire,
And dead delight to new desire;
Love's talk, love's touch there seemed to be
Between the sea-sand and the sea.

Between the sundown and the sea
Love watched one hour of love with me;
Then down the all-golden water-ways
His feet flew after yesterday's;
I saw them come and saw them flee
Between the sea-foam and the sea.

Between the sea-strand and the sea
Love fell on sleep, sleep fell on me;
The first star saw twain turn to one
Between the moonrise and the sun;
The next, that saw not love, saw me
Between the sea-banks and the sea.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837-1909]

PLIGHTED

MINE to the core of the heart, my beauty!
Mine, all mine, and for love, not duty:
Love given willingly, full and free,
Love for love's sake,—as mine to thee.

Duty's a slave that keeps the keys,
But Love, the master, goes in and out
Of his goodly chambers with song and shout,
Just as he please,—just as he please.

Mine, from the dear head's crown, brown-golden,
To the silken foot that's scarce beholding;
Give to a few friends hand or smile,
Like a generous lady, now and awhiie,
But the sanctuary heart, that none dare win,
Keep holiest of holiest evermore;
The crowd in the aisles may watch the door,
The high-priest only enters in.

Mine, my own, without doubts or terrors,
 With all thy goodnesses, all thy errors,
 Unto me and to me alone revealed,
 "A spring shut up, a fountain sealed."

Many may praise thee,—praise mine as thine,
 Many may love thee,—I'll love them too;
 But thy heart of hearts, pure, faithful, and true,
 Must be mine, mine wholly, and only mine.

Mine!—God, I thank Thee that Thou hast given
 Something all mine on this side heaven:
 Something as much myself to be
 As this my soul which I lift to Thee:

Flesh of my flesh, bone of my bone,
 Life of my life, whom Thou dost make
 Two to the world for the world's work's sake,—
 But each unto each, as in Thy sight, *one*.

Dinah Maria Mulock Craik [1826-1887]

A WOMAN'S QUESTION

BEFORE I trust my fate to thee,
 Or place my hand in thine,
 Before I let thy future give
 Color and form to mine,
 Before I peril all for thee, question thy soul to-night for me.

I break all slighter bonds, nor feel
 A shadow of regret:
 Is there one link within the past
 That holds thy spirit yet?
 Or is thy faith as clear and free as that which I can pledge to
 thee?

Does there within thy dimmest dreams
 A possible future shine,
 Wherein thy life could henceforth breathe,
 Untouched, unshared by mine?
 If so, at any pain or cost, O, tell me before all is lost.

Look deeper still. If thou canst feel,
Within thy inmost soul,
That thou hast kept a portion back,
While I have staked the whole,
Let no false pity spare the blow, but in true mercy tell me so.

Is there within thy heart a need
That mine cannot fulfil?
One chord that any other hand
Could better wake or still?

Speak now—lest at some future day my whole life wither and decay.

Lives there within thy nature hid
The demon-spirit change,
Shedding a passing glory still
On all things new and strange?

It may not be thy fault alone,—but shield my heart against thy own.

Couldst thou withdraw thy hand one day
And answer to my claim,
That Fate, and that to-day's mistake—
Not thou—had been to blame?

Some soothe their conscience thus; but thou wilt surely warn and save me now.

Nay, answer not,—I dare not hear,
The words would come too late;
Yet I would spare thee all remorse,
So, comfort thee, my Fate,—

Whatever on my heart may fall—remember, I would risk it all!

Adelaide Anne Procter [1825-1864]

"DINNA ASK ME"

O, DINNA ask me gin I lo'e ye:
Troth, I daurna tell!
Dinna ask me gin I lo'e ye,—
Ask it o' yoursel'.

O, dinna look sae sair at me,
 For weel ye ken me true;
 O, gin ye look sae sair at me,
 I daurna look at you.

When ye gang to yon braw, braw town,
 And bonnier lassies see,
 O, dinna, Jamie, look at them,
 Lest ye should mind na me.

For I could never bide the lass
 That ye'd lo'e mair than me;
 And O, I'm sure my heart wad brak,
 Gin ye'd prove fause to me!

John Dunlop [1755-1820]

A SONG

SING me a sweet, low song of night
 Before the moon is risen,
 A song that tells of the stars' delight
 Escaped from day's bright prison,
 A song that croons with the cricket's voice,
 That sleeps with the shadowed trees,
 A song that shall bid my heart rejoice
 At its tender mysteries!

And then when the song is ended, love,
 Bend down your head unto me,
 Whisper the word that was born above
 Ere the moon had swayed the sea;
 Ere the oldest star began to shine,
 Or the farthest sun to burn,—
 The oldest of words, O heart of mine,
 Yet newest, and sweet to learn.

Hildegarde Hawthorne [18 -

THE REASON

OH, hark the pulses of the night,
 The crickets hidden in the field,
 That beat out music of delight
 Till summoned dawn stands half revealed!

Oh, mark above the bearded corn
And the green wheat and bending rye,
Tuned to the earth and calling dawn,
The stars vibrating in the sky!

And know, divided soul of me,
Here in the meadow, sweet in speech,
This perfect night could never be
Were we not mated each to each.

James Oppenheim [1882-

"MY OWN CÁILIN DONN"

THE blush is on the flower, and the bloom is on the tree,
And the bonnie, bonnie sweet birds are caroling their glee;
And the dews upon the grass are made diamonds by the sun,
All to deck a path of glory for my own Cáilin Donn!

Oh fair she is! Oh rare she is! Oh dearer still to me,
More welcome than the green leaf to winter-stricken tree!
More welcome than the blossom to the weary, dusty bee,
Is the coming of my true love—my own Cáilin Donn!

O sycamore! O sycamore! wave, wave your banners green!
Let all your pennons flutter, O beech! before my queen!
Ye fleet and honeyed breezes, to kiss her hand ye run;
But my heart has passed before ye to my own Cáilin Donn.

Ring out, ring out, O linden, your merry leafy bells!
Unveil your brilliant torches, O chestnut! to the dells;
Strew, strew the glade with splendor, for morn it cometh on!
Oh, the morn of all delight to me—my own Cáilin Donn!

She is coming, where we parted, where she wanders every day;
There's a gay surprise before her who thinks me far away;
Oh, like hearing bugles triumph when the fight of freedom's won,
Is the joy around your footsteps, my own Cáilin Donn!

George Sigerson [1839-

SONG

From "Festus"

OH! the wee green neuk! the sly green neuk,
 The wee sly neuk for me!
 Whare the wheat is wavin' bright and brown,
 And the wind is fresh and free.
 Whare I weave wild weeds, and out o' reeds
 Kerve whissles as I lay;
 And a douce low voice is murmurin' by
 Through the lee-lang simmer day.

And whare a' things luik as though they lo'ed
 To languish in the sun;
 And that, if they feed the fire they dree,
 They wadna ae pang were gone.
 Whare the lift aboon is still as death,
 And bright as life can be;
 While the douce low voice says, Na, na, na!
 But ye mauna luik sae at me.

Whare the lang rank bent is saft and cule,
 And freshenin' till the feet;
 And the spot is sly, and the spinnie high,
 Whare my love and I mak' seat:
 And I tease her till she rins, and then
 I catch her roun' the tree;
 While the poppies shak' their heids and blush:
 Let 'em blush till they drap, for me!

Philip James Bailey [1816-1902]

“BY YON BURN SIDE”

WE'LL meet beside the dusky glen, on yon burn side,
 Where the bushes form a cosie den, on yon burn side;
 Though the broomy knowes be green,
 And there we may be seen,
 Yet we'll meet—we'll meet at e'en, down by yon burn side.

I'll lead thee to the birken bower, on yon burn side,
 Sae sweetly wove wi' woodbine flower, on yon burn side;
 There the busy prying eye,
 Ne'er disturbs the lover's joy,
 While in ither's arms they lie, down by yon burn side.

Awa', ye rude, unfeeling crew, frae yon burn side,
 Those fairy scenes are no for you, by yon burn side;
 There fancy smooths her theme,
 By the sweetly murmuring stream,
 And the rock-lodged echoes skim, down by yon burn side.

Now the plantin' taps are tinged wi' goud, on yon burn side,
 And gloamin' draws her foggy shroud o'er yon burn side;
 Far frae the noisy scene,
 I'll through the fields alone,
 There we'll meet, my ain dear Jean, down by yon burn
 side.

Robert Tannahill [1774-1810]

A PASTORAL

FLOWER of the medlar,
 Crimson of the quince,
 I saw her at the blossom-time,
 And loved her ever since!
 She swept the draughty pleasance,
 The blooms had left the trees,
 The whilst the birds sang canticles,
 In cherry symphonies.

Whiteness of the white rose,
 Redness of the red,
 She went to cut the blush-rose buds
 To tie at the altar-head;
 And some she laid in her bosom,
 And some around her brows,
 And, as she passed, the lily-heads
 All becked and made their bows.

Scarlet of the poppy,
 Yellow of the corn,
 The men were at the garnering,
 A-shouting in the morn;
 I chased her to a pippin-tree,—
 The waking birds all whist,—
 And oh! it was the sweetest kiss
 That I have ever kissed.

Marjorie, mint, and violets
 A-drying round us set,
 'Twas all done in the faience-room
 A-spicing marmalat;
 On one tile was a satyr,
 On one a nymph at bay,
 Methinks the birds will scarce be home
 To wake our wedding-day!

Théophile Marzials [1850—

“WHEN DEATH TO EITHER SHALL COME”

WHEN Death to either shall come,—
 I pray it be first to me,—
 Be happy as ever at home,
 If so, as I wish, it be.

Possess thy heart, my own;
 And sing to thy child on thy knee,
 Or read to thyself alone
 The songs that I made for thee.

Robert Bridges [1844—

THE RECONCILIATION

From “The Princess”

As through the land at eve we went,
 And plucked the ripened ears,
 We fell out, my wife and I,
 O, we fell out, I know not why,
 And kissed again with tears.

And blessings on the falling out
 That all the more endears,
 When we fall out with those we love
 And kiss again with tears!

For when we came where lies the child
 We lost in other years,
 There above the little grave,
 O, there above the little grave,
 We kissed again with tears.

Alfred Tennyson [1809-1892]

SONG

WAIT but a little while—
 The bird will bring
 A heart in tune for melodies
 Unto the spring,
 Till he who's in the cedar there
 Is moved to trill a song so rare,
 And pipe her fair.

Wait but a little while—
 The bud will break;
 The inner rose will open and glow
 For summer's sake;
 Fond bees will lodge within her breast
 Till she herself is plucked and pressed
 Where I would rest.

Wait but a little while—
 The maid will grow
 Gracious with lips and hands to thee,
 With breast of snow.
 To-day Love's mute, but time hath sown
 A soul in her to match thine own,
 Though yet ungrown.

Norman Gale [1862-]

CONTENT

THOUGH singing but the shy and sweet
 Untrod by multitudes of feet,
 Songs bounded by the brook and wheat,
 I have not failed in this,
 The only lure my woodland note,
 To win all England's whitest throat!
 O bards in gold and fire who wrote,
 Be yours all other bliss!

Norman Gale [1862-]

CHE SARA SARA

PREACH wisdom unto him who understands!
 When there's such lovely longing in thine eyes,
 And such a pulse in thy small clinging hands,
 What is the good of being great or wise?

What is the good of beating up the dust
 On the world's highway, vexed with droughty heat?
 Oh, I grow fatalist—what must be must,
 Seeing that thou, beloved, art so sweet!

Victor Plarr [1863-]

“BID ADIEU TO GIRLISH DAYS”

BID adieu, adieu, adieu,
 Bid adieu to girlish days,
 Happy Love is come to woo
 Thee and woo thy girlish ways—
 The zone that doth become thee fair,
 The snood upon thy yellow hair.

When thou hast heard his name upon
 The bugles of the cherubim,
 Begin thou softly to unzone
 Thy girlish bosom unto him,
 And softly to undo the snood
 That is the sign of maidenhood.

James Joyce [18 -

TO F. C.

FAST falls the snow, O lady mine,
Sprinkling the lawn with crystals fine,
But by the gods we won't repine
 While we're together,
We'll chat and rhyme, and kiss and dine,
 Defying weather.

So stir the fire and pour the wine,
And let those sea-green eyes divine
Pour their love-madness into mine:
 I don't care whether
'Tis snow or sun or rain or shine
 If we're together.

Mortimer Collins [1827-1876]

SPRING PASSION

BLUE sky, green fields, and lazy yellow sun!
Why should I hunger for the burning South,
Where beauty needs no travail to be won,
 Now I may kiss her pure impassioned mouth?

Winds rippling with the rich delight of spring!
Why should I yearn for myriad-colored skies,
Lit by auroral suns, when I may sing
 The flame and rapture of her starry eyes?

Oh, song of birds, and flowers fair to see!
Why should I thirst for far-off Eden-isles,
When I may hear her discourse melody,
 And bask, a dreamer, in her dreamy smiles?

Joel Elias Spingarn [1875-]

ADVICE TO A LOVER

OH, if you love her,
 Show her the best of you;
So will you move her
 To bear with the rest of you.

Coldness and jealousy
 Cannot but seem to her
 Signs that a tempest lurks
 Where was sunbeam to her.
 Patience and tenderness
 Still will awake in her
 Hopes of new sunshine,
 Though the storm break for her;
 Love, she will know, for her,
 Like the blue firmament,
 Under the tempest lies
 Gentle and permanent.
 Nor will she ever
 Gentleness find the less
 When the storm overblown
 Leaveth clear kindness.
 Deal with her tenderly,
 Skylike above her,
 Smile on her waywardness,
 Oh, if you love her!

S. Charles Jellicoe [18 -

"YES"

THEY stood above the world,
 In a world apart;
 And she dropped her happy eyes,
 And stilled the throbbing pulses
 Of her happy heart.
 And the moonlight fell above her,
 Her secret to discover;
 And the moonbeams kissed her hair,
 As though no human lover
 Had laid his kisses there.

"Look up, brown eyes," he said,
 "And answer mine;
 Lift up those silken fringes
 That hide a happy light
 Almost divine."

The jealous moonlight drifted
To the finger half-uplifted,
 Where shone the opal ring—
Where the colors danced and shifted
 On the pretty, changeful thing.

Just the old, old story
 Of light and shade,
Love like the opal tender,
Like it may be to vary—
 May be to fade.
Just the old tender story,
Just a glimpse of morning glory
 In an earthly Paradise,
With shadowy reflections
 In a pair of sweet brown eyes.

Brown eyes a man might well
 Be proud to win!
Open to hold his image,
Shut under silken lashes,
 Only to shut him in.
O glad eyes, look together,
For life's dark, stormy weather
 Grows to a fairer thing
When young eyes look upon it
 Through a slender wedding ring.

Richard Doddridge Blackmore [1825-1900]

LOVE

ALL thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of Love,
 And feed his sacred flame.

Oft in my waking dreams do I
Live o'er again that happy hour,
When midway on the mount I lay,
 Beside the ruined tower.

The moonshine, stealing o'er the scene,
Had blended with the lights of eve;
And she was there, my hope, my joy,
My own dear Genevieve!

She leaned against the armèd man,
The statue of the armèd Knight;
She stood and listened to my lay,
Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own,
My hope! my joy! my Genevieve!
She loves me best whene'er I sing
The songs that make her grieve.

I played a soft and doleful air;
I sang an old and moving story—
An old rude song, that suited well
That ruin wild and hoary.

She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes, and modest grace;
For well she knew I could not choose
But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the Knight that wore
Upon his shield a burning brand;
And that for ten long years he wooed
The Lady of the Land.

I told her how he pined: and ah!
The deep, the low, the pleading tone
With which I sang another's love,
Interpreted my own.

She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes, and modest grace;
And she forgave me, that I gazed
Too fondly on her face!

But when I told the cruel scorn
That crazed that bold and lovely Knight,
And that he crossed the mountain-woods,
Nor rested day nor night;

That sometimes from the savage den,
And sometimes from the darksome shade,
And sometimes starting up at once
In green and sunny glade—

There came and looked him in the face
An angel beautiful and bright;
And that he knew it was a Fiend,
This miserable Knight!

And that, unknowing what he did,
He leaped amid a murderous band,
And saved from outrage worse than death
The Lady of the Land;—

And how she wept and clasped his knees;
And how she tended him in vain—
And ever strove to expiate
The scorn that crazed his brain;—

And that she nursed him in a cave;
And how his madness went away,
When on the yellow forest-leaves
A dying man he lay;—

His dying words—but when I reached
That tenderest strain of all the ditty,
My faltering voice and pausing harp
Disturbed her soul with pity!

All impulses of soul and sense
Had thrilled my guileless Genevieve;
The music and the doleful tale,
The rich and balmy eve;

And hopes, and fears that kindle hope,
 An undistinguishable throng,
 And gentle wishes long subdued,
 Subdued and cherished long!

She wept with pity and delight,
 She blushed with love and virgin-shame;
 And like the murmur of a dream,
 I heard her breathe my name.

Her bosom heaved—she stepped aside,
 As conscious of my look she stepped—
 Then suddenly, with timorous eye
 She fled to me and wept.

She half enclosed me with her arms,
 She pressed me with a meek embrace;
 And bending back her head, looked up,
 And gazed upon my face.

'Twas partly love, and partly fear,
 And partly 'twas a bashful art,
 That I might rather feel, than see,
 The swelling of her heart.

I calmed her fears, and she was calm,
 And told her love with virgin pride;
 And so I won my Genevieve,
 My bright and beauteous Bride.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge [1772-1834]

NESTED

ON THE SUSSEX DOWNS

"LURED," little one? Nay, you've but heard
 Love o'er your wild downs roaming;
 Not lured, my bird, my light, swift bird,
 But homing—homing.

"Caught," does she feel? Nay, no net stirred
To catch the heart fore-fated;
Not caught, my bird, my bright, wild bird,
But mated—mated.

And "caged," she fears? Nay, never that word
Of where your brown head rested;
Not caged, my bird, my shy, sweet bird,
But nested—nested!

Habberton Lulham [18 -

THE LETTERS

STILL on the tower stood the vane,
A black yew gloomed the stagnant air;
I peered athwart the chancel pane,
And saw the altar cold and bare.
A clog of lead was round my feet,
A band of pain across my brow;
"Cold altar, heaven and earth shall meet
Before you hear my marriage vow."

I turned and hummed a bitter song
That mocked the wholesome human heart,
And then we met in wrath and wrong,
We met, but only meant to part.
Full cold my greeting was and dry;
She faintly smiled, she hardly moved;
I saw, with half-unconscious eye,
She wore the colors I approved.

She took the little ivory chest,
With half a sigh she turned the key,
Then raised her head with lips compressed,
And gave my letters back to me;
And gave the trinkets and the rings,
My gifts, when gifts of mine could please.
As looks a father on the things
Of his dead son, I looked on these.

She told me all her friends had said;
 I raged against the public liar.
 She talked as if her love were dead;
 But in my words were seeds of fire.
 "No more of love, your sex is known;
 I never will be twice deceived.
 Henceforth I trust the man alone;
 The woman cannot be believed.

"Through slander, meanest spawn of hell,—
 And woman's slander is the worst,—
 And you, whom once I loved so well,
 Through you my life will be accursed."
 I spoke with heart and heat and force,
 I shook her breast with vague alarms—
 Like torrents from a mountain source
 We rushed into each other's arms.

We parted; sweetly gleamed the stars,
 And sweet the vapor-braided blue;
 Low breezes fanned the belfry bars,
 As homeward by the church I drew.
 The very graves appeared to smile,
 So fresh they rose in shadowed swells;
 "Dark porch," I said, "and silent aisle,
 There comes a sound of marriage bells."

Alfred Tennyson [1809-1892]

PROTHALAMION

CALM was the day, and through the trembling air
 Sweet-breathing Zephyrus did softly play
 A gentle spirit, that lightly did delay
 Hot Titan's beams, which then did glister fair;
 When I (whom sullen care,
 Through discontent of my long fruitless stay
 In Prince's Court, and expectation vain
 Of idle hopes, which still do fly away,
 Like empty shadows, did afflict my brain),
 Walked forth to ease my pain

Along the shore of silver streaming Thames;
Whose rutty bank, the which his river hemms,
Was painted all with variable flowers,
And all the meads adorned with dainty gems,
Fit to deck maidens' bowers,
And crown their paramours
Against the bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

There, in a meadow, by the river's side,
A flock of nymphs I chancèd to espy,
All lovely daughters of the flood thereby,
With goodly greenish locks, all loose untied,
As each had been a bride:
And each one had a little wicker basket,
Made of fine twigs, entrailèd curiously,
In which they gathered flowers to fill their flasket,
And, with fine fingers, cropped full feateously
The tender stalks on high.
Of every sort, which in that meadow grew,
They gathered some; the violet, pallid blue,
The little daisy, that at evening closes,
The virgin lily, and the primrose true,
With store of vermeil roses,
To deck their bridegroom's posies
Against the bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

With that I saw two swans of goodly hue
Come softly swimming down along the Lee;
Two fairer birds I yet did never see;
The snow, which doth the top of Pindus strew,
Did never whiter shew,
Nor Jove himself, when he a swan would be
For love of Leda, whiter did appear;
Yet Leda was, they say, as white as he,
Yet not so white as these, nor nothing near;
So purely white they were,
That even the gentle stream, the which them bare,

Seemed foul to them, and bade his billows spare
To wet their silken feathers, lest they might
Soil their fair plumes with water not so fair,
And mar their beauties bright,
That shone as heaven's light,
Against their bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

Eftsoons the nymphs, which now had flowers their fill,
Ran all in haste to see that silver brood,
As they came floating on the crystal flood;
Whom when they saw, they stood amazed still,
Their wondering eyes to fill;
Them seemed they never saw a sight so fair
Of fowls so lovely, that they sure did deem
Them heavenly born, or to be that same pair
Which through the sky draw Venus' silver team;
For sure they did not seem
To be begot of any earthly seed,
But rather angels, or of angels' breed;
Yet were they bred of summer's heat, they say,
In sweetest season, when each flower and weed
The earth did fresh array;
So fresh they seemed as day,
Even as their bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

Then forth they all out of their baskets drew
Great store of flowers, the honor of the field,
That to the sense did fragrant odors yield,
All which upon those goodly birds they threw
And all the waves did strew,
That like old Peneus' waters they did seem,
When down along by pleasant Tempe's shore,
Scattered with flowers, through Thessaly they stream,
That they appear, through lilies' plenteous store,
Like a bride's chamber floor:
Two of those nymphs, meanwhile, two garlands bound
Of freshest flowers which in that mead they found,

The which presenting all in trim array,
Their snowy foreheads therewithal they crowned,
Whilst one did sing this lay,
Prepared against that day,
Against their bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

"Ye gentle birds! the world's fair ornament,
And heaven's glory whom this happy hour
Doth lead unto your lover's blissful bower,
Joy may you have, and gentle hearts' content
Of your love's complement;
And let fair Venus, that is queen of love,
With her heart-quelling son upon you smile,
Whose smile, they say, hath virtue to remove
All love's dislike, and friendship's faulty guile
For ever to assoil;
Let endless peace your steadfast hearts accord,
And blessed plenty wait upon your board;
And let your bed with pleasures chaste abound,
That fruitful issue may to you afford,
Which may your foes confound,
And make your joys redound
Upon your bridal day, which is not long":
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

So ended she: and all the rest around
To her redoubled that her undersong,
Which said their bridal day should not be long:
And gentle Echo from the neighbor-ground
Their accents did resound.
So forth those joyous birds did pass along,
Adown the Lee, that to them murmured low,
As he would speak, but that he lacked a tongue,
Yet did by signs his glad affection show,
Making his stream run slow.
And all the fowl which in his flood did dwell
'Gan flock about these twain, that did excel
The rest, so far as Cynthia doth shend
The lesser stars. So they, enrangèd well,

Did on those two attend,
And their best service lend
Against their wedding day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

At length they all to merry London came,
To merry London, my most kindly nurse,
That to me gave this life's first native source;
Though from another place I take my name,
An house of ancient fame:
There when they came, whereas those bricky towers
The which on Thames' broad, aged back do ride,
Where now the studious lawyers have their bowers,
There whilom wont the Templar Knights to bide,
Till they decayed through pride:
Next whereunto there stands a stately place,
Where oft I gainèd gifts and goodly grace
Of that great lord, which therein wont to dwell,
Whose want too well now feels my friendless case;
But ah! here fits not well
Old woes, but joys, to tell
Against the bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

Yet therein now doth lodge a noble peer,
Great England's glory, and the world's wide wonder,
Whose dreadful name late through all Spain did thunder,
And Hercules' two pillars standing near
Did make to quake and fear:
Fair branch of honor, flower of chivalry!
That fillest England with thy triumph's fame,
Joy have thou of thy noble victory,
And endless happiness of thine own name,
That promiseth the same;
That through thy prowess, and victorious arms,
Thy country may be freed from foreign harms;
And great Elisa's glorious name may ring
Through all the world, filled with thy wide alarms,
Which some brave muse may sing
To ages following,

Upon the bridal day, which is not long:
 Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

From those high towers this noble lord issuing,
 Like radiant Hesper, when his golden hair
 In the ocean billows he hath bathèd fair,
 Descended to the river's open viewing,
 With a great train ensuing.
 Above the rest were goodly to be seen
 Two gentle knights of lovely face and feature
 Beseeming well the bower of any queen,
 With gifts of wit, and ornaments of nature,
 Fit for so goodly stature,
 That like the twins of Jove they seemed in sight,
 Which deck the baldrick of the heavens bright;
 They two, forth pacing to the river's side,
 Received those two fair brides, their love's delight;
 Which, at the appointed tide,
 Each one did make his bride
 Against their bridal day, which is not long:
 Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

Edmund Spenser [1552?-1590]

EPITHALAMION

YE learnèd sisters, which have oftentimes
 Been to me aiding, others to adorn,
 Whom ye thought worthy of your graceful rhymes,
 That even the greatest did not greatly scorn
 To hear their names sung in your simple lays,
 But joyèd in their praise;
 And when ye list your own mishaps to mourn,
 Which death, or love, or fortune's wreck did raise,
 Your string could soon to sadder tenor turn,
 And teach the woods and waters to lament
 Your doleful dreariment:
 Now lay those sorrowful complaints aside;
 And, having all your heads with garlands crowned,
 Help me mine own love's praises to resound;
 Nor let the same of any be envide:
 So Orpheus did for his own bride!

So I unto myself alone will sing;
The woods shall to me answer, and my echo ring.

Early, before the world's light-giving lamp
His golden beam upon the hills doth spread,
Having dispersed the night's uncheerful damp,
Do ye awake; and, with fresh lusty-hed,
Go to the bower of my beloved love,
My truest turtle dove;
Bid her awake; for Hymen is awake,
And long since ready forth his mask to move,
With his bright Tead that flames with many a flake,
And many a bachelor to wait on him,
In their fresh garments trim.
Bid her awake therefore, and soon her dight,
For lo! the wished day is come at last,
That shall, for all the pains and sorrows past,
Pay to her usury of long delight:
And, whilst she doth her dight,
Do ye to her of joy and solace sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

Bring with you all the Nymphs that you can hear,
Both of the rivers and the forests green,
And of the sea that neighbors to her near,
All with gay garlands goodly well beseen.
And let them also with them bring in hand
Another gay garland,
For my fair love, of lilies and of roses,
Bound truelove wise with a blue silk riband;
And let them make great store of bridal posies,
And let them eke bring store of other flowers,
To deck the bridal bowers.
And let the ground whereas her foot shall tread,
For fear the stones her tender foot should wrong,
Be strewed with fragrant flowers all along,
And diapered like the discolored mead;
Which done, do at her chamber door await,
For she will waken straight;

The whiles do ye this song unto her sing,
The woods shall to you answer, and your echo ring.

Ye Nymphs of Mulla, which with careful heed
The silver scaly trouts do tend full well,
And greedy pikes which use therein to feed
(Those trouts and pikes all others do excel);
And ye likewise, which keep the rushy lake,
Where none do fishes take;
Bind up the locks the which hang scattered light,
And in his waters, which your mirror make,
Behold your faces as the crystal bright,
That when you come whereas my love doth lie,
No blemish she may spy.
And eke, ye lightfoot maids, which keep the deer,
That on the hoary mountain used to tower;
And the wild wolves, which seek them to devour,
With your steel darts do chase from coming near;
Be also present here,
To help to deck her, and to help to sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

Wake, now, my love, awake! for it is time;
The rosy morn long since left Tithon's bed,
All ready to her silver coach to climb;
And Phœbus 'gins to show his glorious head.
Hark, how the cheerful birds do chant their lays
And carol of love's praise.
The merry lark her matins sings aloft;
The thrush replies; the mavis descant plays;
The ouzel shrills; the ruddock warbles soft;
So godly all agree, with sweet consent,
To this day's merriment.
Ah! my dear love, why do ye sleep thus long,
When meeter were that ye should now awake,
To await the coming of your joyous mate,
And hearken to the birds' love-learnèd song,
The dewy leaves among!
For they of joy and pleasance to you sing,
That all the woods them answer, and their echo ring.

My love is now awake out of her dreams,
 And her fair eyes, like stars that dimmèd were
 With darksome cloud, now show their goodly beams
 More bright than Hesperus his head doth rear.
 Come now, ye damsels, daughters of delight,
 Help quickly her to dight:
 But first come, ye fair hours, which were begot
 In Jove's sweet paradise of Day and Night;
 Which do the seasons of the year allot,
 And all that ever in this world is fair,
 Do make and still repair:
 And ye three handmaids of the Cyprian queen,
 The which do still adorn her beauty's pride,
 Help to adorn my beautifulest bride;
 And as ye her array, still throw between
 Some graces to be seen,
 And, as ye use to Venus, to her sing,
 The whiles the woods shall answer, and your echo ring.

Now is my love all ready forth to come:
 Let all the virgins therefore well await:
 And ye fresh boys, that tend upon her groom,
 Prepare yourselves; for he is coming straight;
 Set all your things in seemly good array,
 Fit for so joyful day:
 The joyfulest day that ever sun did see.
 Fair Sun! show forth thy favorable ray,
 And let thy life-full heat not fervent be,
 For fear of burning her sunshiny face,
 Her beauty to disgrace.
 O fairest Phœbus! father of the Muse!
 If ever I did honor thee aright,
 Or sing the thing that might thy mind delight,
 Do not thy servant's simple boon refuse;
 But let this day, let this one day, be mine;
 Let all the rest be thine.
 Then I thy sovereign praises loud will sing,
 That all the woods shall answer, and their echo ring.
 Hark! how the Minstrels 'gin to shrill aloud
 Their merry music that resounds from far,

The pipe, the tabor, and the trembling croud,
That well agree withouten breach or jar.
But, most of all, the Damsels do delight
When they their timbrels smite,
And thereunto do dance and carol sweet,
That all the senses they do ravish quite;
The whiles the boys run up and down the street,
Crying aloud with strong confusèd noise,
As if it were one voice,
Hymen, iō Hymen, Hymen, they do shout;
That even to the heavens their shouting shrill
Doth reach, and all the firmament doth fill;
To which the people standing all about,
As in approvance, do thereto applaud,
And loud advance her laud;
And evermore they Hymen, Hymen sing,
That all the woods them answer, and their echo ring.

Lo! where she comes along with portly pace,
Like Phoebe, from her chamber of the East,
Arising forth to run her mighty race,
Clad all in white, that seems a virgin best.
So well it her beseems, that ye would ween
Some angel she had been.
Her long loose yellow locks like golden wire,
Sprinkled with pearl, and pearling flowers atween,
Do like a golden mantle her attire;
And, being crownèd with a garland green,
Seem like some maiden queen.
Her modest eyes, abashèd to behold
So many gazers as on her do stare,
Upon the lowly ground affixèd are;
Nor dare lift up her countenance too bold,
But blush to hear her praises sung so loud,
So far from being proud.
Nathless do ye still loud her praises sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

Tell me, ye merchants' daughters, did ye see
So fair a creature in your town before;

So sweet, so lovely, and so mild as she,
Adorned with beauty's grace and virtue's store?
Her goodly eyes like sapphires shining bright,
Her forehead ivory white,
Her cheeks like apples which the sun hath ruddied,
Her lips like cherries charming men to bite,
Her breast like to a bowl of cream uncruddled,
Her paps like lilies budded,
Her snowy neck like to a marble tower;
And all her body like a palace fair,
Ascending up, with many a stately stair,
To honor's seat and chastity's sweet bower.
Why stand ye still, ye virgins, in amaze,
Upon her so to gaze,
Whiles ye forget your former lay to sing,
To which the woods did answer, and your echo ring?

But if ye saw that which no eyes can see,
The inward beauty of her lively spright,
Garnished with heavenly gifts of high degree,
Much more then would ye wonder at that sight,
And stand astonished like to those which read
Medusa's mazeful head.

There dwells sweet love, and constant chastity,
Unspotted faith, and comely womanhood,
Regard of honor, and mild modesty;
There virtue reigns as queen in royal throne,
And giveth laws alone,
The which the base affections do obey,
And yield their services unto her will;
Nor thought of thing uncomely ever may
Thereto approach to tempt her mind to ill.
Had ye once seen these her celestial treasures,
And unrevealed pleasures,
Then would ye wonder, and her praises sing,
That all the woods should answer, and your echo ring.

Open the temple gates unto my love,
Open them wide that she may enter in,
And all the posts adorn as doth behove,
And all the pillars deck with garlands trim,

For to receive this Saint with honor due,
That cometh in to you.
With trembling steps, and humble reverence,
She cometh in, before the Almighty's view;
Of her ye virgins learn obedience,
When so ye come into those holy places,
To humble your proud faces:
Bring her up to the high altar, that she may
The sacred ceremonies there partake,
The which do endless matrimony make;
And let the roaring organs loudly play
The praises of the Lord in lively notes;
The whiles, with hollow throats,
The Choristers the joyous Anthems sing,
That all the woods may answer, and their echo ring.

Behold, whiles she before the altar stands,
Hearing the holy priest that to her speaks,
And blesseth her with his two happy hands,
How the red roses flush up in her cheeks,
And the pure snow, with goodly vermill stain
Like crimson dyed in grain:
That even the Angels, which continually
About the sacred altar do remain,
Forget their service and about her fly,
Oft peeping in her face, that seems more fair,
The more they on it stare.
But her sad eyes, still fastened on the ground,
Are governèd with goodly modesty,
That suffers not one look to glance awry,
Which may let in a little thought unsound.
Why blush ye, love, to give to me your hand,
The pledge of all our band?
Sing, ye sweet Angels, Alleluja sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

Now all is done: bring home the bride again;
Bring home the triumph of our victory:
Bring home with you the glory of her gain;
With joyance bring her and with jollity.

Never had man more joyful day than this,
 Whom heaven would heap with bliss.
 Make feast therefore now all this live-long day;
 This day for ever to me holy is.
 Pour out the wine without restraint or stay,
 Pour not by cups, but by the belly full,
 Pour out to all that will,
 And sprinkle all the posts and walls with wine,
 That they may sweat, and drunken be withal.
 Crown ye God Bacchus with a coronal,
 And Hymen also crown with wreaths of vine;
 And let the Graces dance unto the rest,
 For they can do it best:
 The whiles the maidens do their carol sing,
 To which the woods shall answer, and their echo ring.

Ring ye the bells, ye young men of the town,
 And leave your wonted labors for this day:
 This day is holy; do ye write it down,
 That ye for ever it remember may.
 This day the sun is in his chiefest height,
 With Barnaby the bright,
 From whence declining daily by degrees,
 He somewhat loseth of his heat and light,
 When once the Crab behind his back he sees.
 But for this time it ill ordainèd was,
 To choose the longest day in all the year,
 And shortest night, when longest fitter were:
 Yet never day so long, but late would pass.
 Ring ye the bells, to make it wear away,
 And bonfires make all day;
 And dance about them, and about them sing,
 That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

Ah! when will this long weary day have end,
 And lend me leave to come unto my love?
 How slowly do the hours their numbers spend?
 How slowly does sad Time his feathers move?
 Haste thee, O fairest Planet, to thy home,
 Within the Western foam:

Thy tired steeds long since have need of rest.
Long though it be, at last I see it gloom,
And the bright evening-star with golden crest
Appear out of the East.
Fair child of beauty! glorious lamp of love!
That all the host of heaven in ranks dost lead,
And guidest lovers through the night's sad dread,
How cheerfully thou lookest from above,
And seems to laugh atween thy twinkling light,
As joying in the sight
Of these glad many, which for joy do sing,
That all the woods them answer, and their echo ring!

Now, cease, ye damsels, your delights fore-past;
Enough is it that all the day was yours:
Now day is done, and night is nighing fast,
Now bring the bride into the bridal bowers.
The night is come, now soon her disarray,
And in her bed her lay;
Lay her in lilies and in violets,
And silken curtains over her display,
And odored sheets, and Arras coverlets.
Behold how goodly my fair love does lie,
In proud humility!
Like unto Maia, when as Jove her took
In Tempe, lying on the flowery grass,
'Twixt sleep and wake, after she weary was,
With bathing in the Acidalian brook.
Now it is night, ye damsels may be gone,
And leave my love alone,
And leave likewise your former lay to sing:
The woods no more shall answer, nor your echo ring.

Now welcome, night! thou night so long expected,
That long day's labor dost at last defray,
And all my cares, which cruel Love collected,
Hast summed in one, and cancellèd for aye:
Spread thy broad wing over my love and me,
That no man may us see;
And in thy sable mantle us enwrap,
From fear of peril and foul horror free.

Let no false treason seek us to entrap,
Nor any dread disquiet once annoy
The safety of our joy;
But let the night be calm, and quietsome,
Without tempestuous storms or sad affray:
Like as when Jove with fair Alcmena lay,
When he begot the great Tirynthian groom:
Or like as when he with thyself did lie
And begot Majesty.
And let the maids and young men cease to sing;
Nor let the woods them answer, nor their echo ring.

Let no lamenting cries, nor doleful tears,
Be heard all night within, nor yet without:
Nor let false whispers, breeding hidden fears,
Break gentle sleep with misconceived doubt.
Let no deluding dreams, nor dreadful sights,
Make sudden sad affrights;
Nor let house-fires, nor lightning's helpless harms,
Nor let the Puck, nor other evil sprites,
Nor let mischievous witches with their charms,
Nor let hobgoblins, names whose sense we see not,
Fray us with things that be not:
Let not the screech-owl nor the stork be heard,
Nor the night raven, that still deadly yells;
Nor damnèd ghosts, called up with mighty spells,
Nor grizzly vultures, make us once afraid:
Nor let the unpleasant choir of frogs still croaking
Make us to wish their choking.
Let none of these their dreary accents sing;
Nor let the woods them answer, nor their echo ring.

But let still Silence true night-watches keep,
That sacred Peace may in assurance reign,
And timely Sleep, when it is time to sleep,
May pour his limbs forth on your pleasant plain;
The whiles an hundred little wingèd loves,
Like divers-feathered doves,
Shall fly and flutter round about your bed,
And in the secret dark, that none reproves,
Their pretty stealths shall work, and snares shall spread

To filch away sweet snatches of delight,
Concealed through covert night.
Ye sons of Venus, play your sports at will!
For greedy pleasure, careless of your toys,
Thinks more upon her paradise of joys,
Then what ye do, albeit good or ill.
All night therefore attend your merry play,
For it will soon be day:
Now none doth hinder you, that say or sing;
Nor will the woods now answer, nor your echo ring.

Who is the same, which at my window peeps?
Or whose is that fair face that shines so bright?
Is it not Cynthia, she that never sleeps,
But walks about high heaven all the night?
O! fairest goddess, do thou not envy
My love with me to spy:
For thou likewise didst love, though now unthought,
And for a fleece of wool, which privily
The Latmian shepherd once unto thee brought,
His pleasures with thee wrought.
Therefore to us be favorable now;
And since of women's labors thou hast charge,
And generation goodly dost enlarge,
Incline thy will to effect our wishful vow,
And the chaste womb inform with timely seed,
That may our comfort breed:
Till which we cease our hopeful hap to sing;
Nor let the woods us answer, nor our echo ring.

And thou, great Juno! which with awful might
The laws of wedlock still dost patronize,
And the religion of the faith first plight
With sacred rites hast taught to solemnize;
And eke for comfort often callèd art
Of women in their smart;
Eternally bind thou this lovely band,
And all thy blessings unto us impart.
And thou, glad Genius! in whose gentle hand
The bridal bower and genial bed remain,
Without blemish or stain;

And the sweet pleasures of their love's delight
 With secret aid dost succor and supply,
 Till they bring forth the fruitful progeny;
 Send us the timely fruit of this same night.
 And thou, fair Hebe! and thou, Hymen free!
 Grant that it may so be.
 Till which we cease your further praise to sing;
 Nor any woods shall answer, nor your echo ring.

And ye high heavens, the temple of the gods,
 In which a thousand torches flaming bright
 Do burn, that to us wretched earthly clods
 In dreadful darkness lend desirèd light;
 And all ye powers which in the same remain,
 More than we men can feign,
 Pour out your blessing on us plenteously,
 And happy influence upon us rain,
 That we may raise a large posterity,
 Which from the earth, which they may long possess
 With lasting happiness,
 Up to your haughty palaces may mount;
 And, for the guerdon of their glorious merit,
 May heavenly tabernacles there inherit,
 Of blessed Saints for to increase the count.
 So let us rest, sweet love, in hope of this,
 And cease till then our timely joys to sing:
 The woods no more us answer, nor our echo ring!

*Song! made in lieu of many ornaments,
 With which my love should duly have been decked,
 Which cutting off through hasty accidents,
 Ye would not stay your due time to expect,
 But promised both to recompense;
 Be unto her a goodly ornament,
 And for short time an endless monument.*

Edmund Spenser [1552?-1599]

BRIDAL SONG

From "The Two Noble Kinsmen"

ROSES, their sharp spines being gone,
 Not royal in their smells alone,

But in their hue;
 Maiden pinks, of odor faint,
 Daisies smell-less, yet most quaint,
 And sweet thyme true;

Primrose, firstborn child of Ver;
 Merry springtime's harbinger,
 With her bells dim;
 Oxlips in their cradles growing,
 Marigolds on death-beds blowing,
 Larks'-heels trim;

All dear Nature's children sweet
 Lie 'fore bride and bridegroom's feet,
 Blessing their sense!
 Not an angel of the air,
 Bird melodious or bird fair,
 Be absent hence!

The crow, the slanderous cuckoo, nor
 The boding raven, nor chough hoar,
 Nor chattering pye,
 May on our bride-house perch or sing,
 Or with them any discord bring,
 But from it fly!

John Fletcher (?) [1579-1625]

THE NEWLY-WEDDED

Now the rite is duly done,
 Now the word is spoken,
 And the spell has made us one
 Which may ne'er be broken;
 Rest we, dearest, in our home,
 Roam we o'er the heather:
 We shall rest, and we shall roam,
 Shall we not? together.

From this hour the summer rose
 Sweeter breathes to charm us;
 From this hour the winter snows
 Lighter fall to harm us:

Fair or foul—on land or sea—
 Come the wind or weather,
 Best and worst, whate'er they be,
 We shall share together.

Death, who friend from friend can part,
 Brother rend from brother,
 Shall but link us, heart and heart,
 Closer to each other:
 We will call his anger play,
 Deem his dart a feather,
 When we meet him on our way
 Hand in hand together.

Winthrop Mackworth Praed [1802-1839]

"I SAW TWO CLOUDS AT MORNING"

I saw two clouds at morning,
 Tinged by the rising sun,
 And in the dawn they floated on,
 And mingled into one;
 I thought that morning cloud was blest,
 It moved so sweetly to the west.

I saw two summer currents
 Flow smoothly to their meeting,
 And join their course, with silent force,
 In peace each other greeting;
 Calm was their course through banks of green,
 While dimpling eddies played between.

Such be your gentle motion,
 Till life's last pulse shall beat;
 Like summer's beam, and summer's stream,
 Float on, in joy, to meet
 A calmer sea, where storms shall cease,
 A purer sky, where all is peace.

John Gardiner Calkins Brainard [1796-1828]

HOLY MATRIMONY

THE voice that breathed o'er Eden,
That earliest wedding-day,
The primal marriage blessing,
It hath not passed away.

Still in the pure espousal
Of Christian man and maid,
The holy Three are with us,
The threefold grace is said.

For dower of blessedèd children,
For love and faith's sweet sake,
For high mysterious union,
Which naught on earth may break.

Be present, awful Father,
To give away this bride,
As Eve thou gav'st to Adam
Out of his own pierced side:

Be present, Son of Mary,
To join their loving hands,
As thou didst bind two natures
In thine eternal bands:

Be present, Holiest Spirit,
To bless them as they kneel,
As thou for Christ, the Bridegroom,
The heavenly Spouse dost seal.

Oh, spread thy pure wing o'er them,
Let no ill power find place,
When onward to thine altar
The hallowed path they trace,

To cast their crowns before thee
In perfect sacrifice,
Till to the home of gladness
With Christ's own Bride they rise. AMEN.

John Keble [1792-1866]

THE BRIDE

BEAT on the Tom-toms, and scatter the flowers,
 Jasmine, hibiscus, vermillion and white,
 This is the day, and the Hour of Hours,
 Bring forth the Bride for her Lover's delight.
 Maidens no more as a maiden shall claim her,
 Near, in his Mystery, draweth Desire.
 Who, if she waver a moment, shall blame her?
 She is a flower, and love is a fire.

Give her the anklets, the ring, and the necklace,
 Darken her eyelids with delicate art,
 Heighten the beauty, so youthful and fleckless,
 By the Gods favored, oh, Bridegroom, thou art!
 Twine in thy fingers her fingers so slender,
 Circle together the Mystical Fire,
 Bridegroom,—a whisper,—be gentle and tender,
 Choti Tinchaurya knows not desire.

Bring forth the silks and the veil that shall cover
 Beauty, till yesterday careless and wild;
 Red are her lips for the kiss of a lover,
 Ripe are her breasts for the lips of a child.
 Center and Shrine of Mysterious Power,
 Chalice of Pleasure and Rose of Delight,
 Shyly aware of the swift-coming hour,
 Waiting the shade and the silence of night.

Still must the Bridegroom his longing dissemble,
 Longing to loosen the silk-woven cord,
 Ah, how his fingers will flutter and tremble,
 Fingers well skilled with the bridle and sword.
 Thine is his valor, oh Bride, and his beauty,
 Thine to possess and re-issue again,
 Such is thy tender and passionate duty,
 Licit thy pleasure and honored thy pain.

Choti Tinchaurya, lovely and tender,
 Still all unbroken to sorrow and strife,
 Come to the Bridegroom who, silk-clad and slender,
 Brings thee the Honor and Burden of Life.
 Bidding farewell to thy light-hearted playtime,
 Worship thy Lover with fear and delight;
 Art thou not ever, though slave of his daytime,
 Choti Tinchaurya, queen of his night?

Laurence Hope [1865-1904]

A MARRIAGE CHARM

I SET a charm upon your hurrying breath,
 I set a charm upon your wandering feet,
 You shall not leave me—not for life, nor death,
 Not even though you cease to love me, Sweet.

A woman's love nine Angels cannot bind,
 Nor any rune that wind or water knows,
 My heart were all as well set on the wind,
 Or bound, to live or die, upon a rose.

I set a charm upon you, foot and hand,
 That you and Knowledge, love, may never meet,
 That you may never chance to understand
 How strong you are, how weak your lover, Sweet.

I set my charm upon your kindly arm,
 I set it as a seal upon your breast;
 That you may never hear another's charm,
 Nor guess another's gift outruns my best.

I bid your wandering footsteps me to follow,
 Your thoughts to travel after in my track,
 I am the sky that waits you, dear gray swallow,
 No wind of mine shall ever blow you back.

I am your dream, Sweet; so no more of dreaming,
 Your lips to mine must end this chanted charm,
 Your heart to mine, 'neath nut-brown tresses streaming,
 I set my love a seal upon your arm.

Nora Hopper [18 -

"LIKE A LAVEROCK IN THE LIFT"

It's we two, it's we two, it's we two for aye,
 All the world, and we two, and Heaven be our stay!
 Like a laverock in the lift, sing, O bonny bride!
 All the world was Adam once, with Eve by his side.

What's the world, my lass, my love!—what can it do?
 I am thine, and thou art mine; life is sweet and new.
 If the world have missed the mark, let it stand by;
 For we two have gotten leave, and once more we'll try.

Like a laverock in the lift, sing, O bonny bride!
 It's we two, it's we two, happy side by side.
 Take a kiss from me, thy man; now the song begins:
 "All is made afresh for us, and the brave heart wins."

When the darker days come, and no sun will shine,
 Thou shalt dry my tears, lass, and I'll dry thine.
 It's we two, it's we two, while the world's away,
 Sitting by the golden sheaves on our wedding-day.

Jean Ingelow [1820-1897]

MY OWEN

Proud of you, fond of you, clinging so near to you,
 Light is my heart now I know I am dear to you!
 Glad is my voice now, so free it may sing for you
 All the wild love that is burning within for you!
 Tell me once more, tell it over and over,
 The tale of that eve which first saw you my lover.

Now I need never blush
 At my heart's hottest gush—
 The wife of my Owen her heart may discover!

Proud of you, fond of you, having all right in you,
 Quitting all else through my love and delight in you!
 Glad is my heart since 'tis beating so nigh to you!
 Light is my step for it always may fly to you!

Clasped in your arms where no sorrow can reach to me,
Reading your eyes till new love they shall teach to me.

Though wild and weak till now,
By that blest marriage vow,

More than the wisest know your heart shall preach to me.

Ellen Mary Patrick Downing [1828-1869]

DORIS: A PASTORAL

I SAT with Doris, the shepherd maiden;
Her crook was laden with wreathèd flowers.
I sat and wooed her through sunlight wheeling,
And shadows stealing for hours and hours.

And she, my Doris, whose lap incloses
Wild summer roses of faint perfume,
The while I sued her, kept hushed and harkened
Till shades had darkened from gloss to gloom.

She touched my shoulder with fearful finger;
She said, "We linger, we must not stay;
My flock's in danger, my sheep will wander;
Behold them yonder, how far they stray!"

I answered bolder, "Nay, let me hear you,
And still be near you, and still adore!
No wolf nor stranger will touch one yearling—
Ah! stay my darling a moment more!"

She whispered, sighing, "There will be sorrow
Beyond to-morrow, if I lose to-day;
My fold unguarded, my flock unfolded—
I shall be scolded and sent away!"

Said I, denying, "If they do miss you,
They ought to kiss you when you get home;
And well rewarded by friend and neighbor
Should be the labor from which you come."

"They might remember," she answered meekly,
 "That lambs are weakly and sheep are wild;
 But if they love me it's none so fervent—
 I am a servant and not a child."

Then each hot ember glowed quick within me,
 And love did win me to swift reply:
 "Ah! do but prove me, and none shall bind you,
 Nor fray nor find you until I die!"

She blushed and started, and stood awaiting,
 As if debating in dreams divine;
 But I did brave them—I told her plainly,
 She doubted vainly, she must be mine.

So we, twin-hearted, from all the valley
 Did rouse and rally her nibbling ewes;
 And homeward drove them, we two together,
 Through blooming heather and gleaming dews.

That simple duty such grace did lend her,
 My Doris tender, my Doris true,
 That I her warder did always bless her,
 And often press her to take her due.

And now in beauty she fills my dwelling
 With love excelling, and undefiled;
 And love doth guard her, both fast and fervent,
 No more a servant, nor yet a child.

Arthur Joseph Munby [1828-1910]

"HE'D NOTHING BUT HIS VIOLIN"

He'd nothing but his violin,
 I'd nothing but my song,
 But we were wed when skies were blue
 And summer days were long;
 And when we rested by the hedge,
 The robins came and told
 How they had dared to woo and win,
 When early Spring was cold.

We sometimes supped on dew-berries,
Or slept among the hay,
But oft the farmers' wives at eve
Came out to hear us play;
The rare old songs, the dear old tunes,—
We could not starve for long
While my man had his violin,
And I my sweet love-song.

The world has aye gone well with us
Old man since we were one,—
Our homeless wandering down the lanes
It long ago was done.
But those who wait for gold or gear,
For houses or for kine,
Till youth's sweet spring grows brown and sere,
And love and beauty tine,
Will never know the joy of hearts
That met without a fear,
When you had but your violin
And I a song, my dear.

Mary Kyle Dallas [1830-1897]

LOVE'S CALENDAR

THAT gusty spring, each afternoon
By the ivied cot I passed,
And noted at that lattice soon
Her fair face downward cast;
Still in the same place seated there,
So diligent, so very fair.

Oft-times I said I knew her not,
Yet that way round would go,
Until, when evenings lengthened out,
And bloomed the may-hedge row,
I met her by the wayside well,
Whose waters, maybe, broke the spell.

For, leaning on her pail, she prayed,
 I'd lift it to her head.
 So did I; but I'm much afraid
 Some wasteful drops were shed,
 And that we blushed, as face to face
 Needs must we stand the shortest space.
 Then when the sunset mellowed through
 The ears of rustling grain,
 When lattices wide open flew,
 When ash-leaves fell like rain,
 As well as I she knew the hour
 At morn or eve I neared her bower.
 And now that snow o'erlays the thatch,
 Each starlit eve within
 The door she waits, I raise the latch,
 And kiss her lifted chin;
 Nor do I think we've blushed again,
 For Love hath made but one of twain.

William Bell Scott [1811-1890]

HOME

Two birds within one nest;
 Two hearts within one breast;
 Two spirits in one fair,
 Firm league of love and prayer,
 Together bound for aye, together blest.

An ear that waits to catch
 A hand upon the latch;
 A step that hastens its sweet rest to win;
 A world of care without,
 A world of strife shut out,
 A world of love shut in.

Dora Greenwell [1821-1882]

TWO LOVERS

Two lovers by a moss-grown spring:
 They leaned soft cheeks together there,
 Mingled the dark and sunny hair,
 And heard the wooing thrushes sing.

O budding time!
O love's blest prime!

Two wedded from the portal stept:
The bells made happy carolings,
The air was soft as fanning wings,
White petals on the pathway slept.
O pure-eyed bride!
O tender pride!

Two faces o'er a cradle bent:
Two hands above the head were locked:
These pressed each other while they rocked,
Those watched a life that love had sent.
O solemn hour!
O hidden power!

Two parents by the evening fire:
The red light fell about their knees
On heads that rose by slow degrees
Like buds upon the lily spire.
O patient life!
O tender strife!

The two still sat together there,
The red light shone about their knees;
But all the heads by slow degrees
Had gone and left that lonely pair.
O voyage fast!
O vanished past!

The red light shone upon the floor
And made the space between them wide;
They drew their chairs up side by side,
Their pale cheeks joined, and said, "Once more!"
O memories!
O past that is!

George Eliot [1819-1880]

THE LAND OF HEART'S DESIRE

"SOMEWHERE," he mused, "its dear enchantments wait,
 That land, so heavenly sweet;
 Yet all the paths we follow, soon or late,
 End in the desert's heat.

"And still it lures us to the eager quest,
 And calls us day by day"—
 "But I," she said, her babe upon her breast,
"But I have found the way."

"Some time," he sighed, "when youth and joy are spent,
 Our feet the gates may win"—
 "But I," she smiled, with eyes of deep content,
"But I have entered in."

Emily Huntington Miller [1833-1913]

MY AIN WIFE

I WADNA gi'e my ain wife
 For ony wife I see;
 I wadna gi'e my ain wife
 For ony wife I see;
 A bonnier yet I've never seen,
 A better canna be—
 I wadna gi'e my ain wife
 For ony wife I see!

O couthie is my ingle-check,
 An' cheerie is my Jean;
 I never see her angry look,
 Nor hear her word on ane.
 She's gude wi' a' the neebors roun'
 An' aye gude wi' me—
 I wadna gi'e my ain wife
 For ony wife I see.

An' O her looks sae kindlie,
 They melt my heart outright,
 When o'er the baby at her breast
 She hangs wi' fond delight;

She looks intill its bonnie face,
 An' syne looks to me—
I wadna gi'e my ain wife
For ony wife I see.

Alexander Laing [1787-1857]

THE IRISH WIFE

I WOULD not give my Irish wife
 For all the dames of the Saxon land;
I would not give my Irish wife
 For the Queen of France's hand;
For she to me is dearer
 Than castles strong, or lands, or life.
An outlaw—so I'm near her
 To love till death my Irish wife.

O what would be this home of mine,
 A ruined, hermit-haunted place,
 But for the light that nightly shines
 Upon its walls from Kathleen's face!
What comfort in a mine of gold,
 What pleasure in a royal life,
 If the heart within lay dead and cold,
 If I could not wed my Irish wife?

I knew the law forbade the banns;
 I knew my king abhorred her race;
 Who never bent before their clans
 Must bow before their ladies' grace.
 Take all my forfeited domain,
 I cannot wage with kinsmen strife:
 Take knightly gear and noble name,
 And I will keep my Irish wife.

My Irish wife has clear blue eyes,
 My heaven by day, my stars by night;
 And twin-like truth and fondness lies
 Within her swelling bosom white.

My Irish wife has golden hair,
 Apollo's harp had once such strings,
 Apollo's self might pause to hear
 Her bird-like carol when she sings.

I would not give my Irish wife
 For all the dames of the Saxon land;
 I would not give my Irish wife
 For the Queen of France's hand;
 For she to me is dearer
 Than castles strong, or lands, or life:
 In death I would be near her,
 And rise beside my Irish wife.

Thomas D'Arcy McGee [1825-1868]

MY WIFE'S A WINSOME WEE THING

SHE is a winsome wee thing,
 She is a handsome wee thing,
 She is a bonnie wee thing,
 This sweet wee wife o' mine.

I never saw a fairer,
 I never lo'ed a dearer,
 And niest my heart I'll wear her,
 For fear my jewel tine.

She is a winsome wee thing,
 She is a handsome wee thing,
 She is a bonnie wee thing,
 This sweet wee wife o' mine.

The world's wrack we share o't,
 The warsle and the care o't:
 Wi' her I'll blithely bear it,
 And think my lot divine.

Robert Burns [1759-1796]

LETTICE

I SAID to Lettice, our sister Lettice,
 While drooped and glistened her eyelash brown,
 "Your man's a poor man, a cold and dour man,
 There's many a better about our town."

She smiled securely—“He loves me purely:
A true heart’s safe, both in smile or frown;
And nothing harms me while his love warms me,
Whether the world go up or down.”

“He comes of strangers, and they are rangers,
And ill to trust, girl, when out of sight:
Fremd folk may blame ye, and e’en defame ye,—
A gown oft handled looks seldom white.”
She raised serenely her eyelids queenly,—
“My innocence is my whitest gown;
No harsh tongue grieves me while he believes me,
Whether the world go up or down.”

“Your man’s a frail man, was ne’er a hale man,
And sickness knocketh at every door,
And death comes making bold hearts cower, breaking—”
Our Lettice trembled;—but once, no more.
“If death should enter, smite to the center
Our poor home palace, all crumbling down,
He cannot fright us, nor disunite us,
Life bears Love’s cross, death brings Love’s crown.”

Dinah Maria Mulock Craik [1826–1887]

“IF THOU WERT BY MY SIDE, MY LOVE”

If thou wert by my side, my love,
How fast would evening fail
In green Bengala’s palmy grove,
Listening the nightingale!

If thou, my love, wert by my side,
My babies at my knee,
How gayly would our pinnace glide
O’er Gunga’s mimic sea!

I miss thee at the dawning gray,
When, on our deck reclined,
In careless ease my limbs I lay
And woo the cooler wind.

I miss thee when by Gunga's stream
 My twilight steps I guide,
 But most beneath the lamp's pale beam
 I miss thee from my side.

I spread my books, my pencil try,
 The lingering noon to cheer,
 But miss thy kind, approving eye,
 Thy meek, attentive ear.

But when at morn and eve the star
 Beholds me on my knee,
 I feel, though thou art distant far,
 Thy prayers ascend for me.

Then on! then on! where duty leads,
 My course be onward still,
 O'er broad Hindostan's sultry meads,
 O'er bleak Almorah's hill.

That course nor Delhi's kingly gates,
 Nor mild Malwah detain;
 For sweet the bliss us both awaits
 By yonder western main.

Thy towers, Bombay, gleam bright, they say,
 Across the dark blue sca;
 But ne'er were hearts so light and gay
 As then shall meet in thee!

Reginald Heber [1783-1826]

THE SHEPHERD'S WIFE'S SONG

From "The Mourning Garment"

Ah, what is love? It is a pretty thing,
 As sweet unto a shepherd as a king;
 And sweeter, too:

For kings have cares that wait upon a crown,
And cares can make the sweetest love to frown:

Ah then, ah then,

If country loves such sweet desires do gain,
What lady would not love a shepherd swain?

His flocks are folded; he comes home at night
As merry as a king in his delight,

And merrier, too:

For kings bethink them what the state require,
Where shepherds, careless, carol by the fire:

He kisseth first, then sits as blithe to eat
His cream and curds, as doth a king his meat,

And blither, too:

For kings have often fears when they do sup,
Where shepherds dread no poison in their cup:

To bed he goes, as wanton then, I ween,
As is a king in dalliance with a queen;

More wanton, too:

For kings have many griefs, affects to move,
Where shepherds have no greater grief than love:

Upon his couch of straw he sleeps as sound
As doth the king upon his bed of down;

More sounder, too:

For cares cause kings full oft their sleep to spill,
Where weary shepherds lie and snort their fill:

Thus, with his wife, he spends the year as blithe
As doth the king at every tide or sithe,

And blither, too:

For kings have wars and broils to take in hand,
Where shepherds laugh and love upon the land:

Ah then, ah then,

Since country loves such sweet desires do gain,
What lady would not love a shepherd swain?

Robert Greene [1560?–1592]

"TRUTH DOTH TRUTH DESERVE"

From the "Arcadia"

WHO doth desire that chaste his wife should be,
 First be he true, for truth doth truth deserve:
 Then such be he as she his worth may see,
 And one man still credit with her preserve.
 Not toying kind, nor causelessly unkind;
 Not stirring thoughts, nor yet denying right;
 Not spying faults, nor in plain errors blind;
 Never hard hand, nor ever reins too light.
 As far from want, as far from vain expense
 (The one doth force, the latter doth entice);
 Allow good company, but keep from thence
 All filthy mouths that glory in their vice.
 This done, thou hast no more, but leave the rest
 To virtue, fortune, time, and woman's breast.

Philip Sidney [1554-1586]

THE MARRIED LOVER

From "The Angel in the House"

WHY, having won her, do I woo?
 Because her spirit's vestal grace
 Provokes me always to pursue,
 But, spirit-like, eludes embrace;
 Because her womanhood is such
 That, as on court-days subjects kiss
 The Queen's hand, yet so near a touch
 Affirms no mean familiarness;
 Nay, rather marks more fair the height
 Which can with safety so neglect
 To dread, as lower ladies might,
 That grace could meet with disrespect;
 Thus she with happy favor feeds
 Allegiance from a love so high
 That thence no false conceit proceeds
 Of difference bridged, or state put by;

Because, although in act and word
As lowly as a wife can be,
Her manners, when they call me lord,
Remind me 'tis by courtesy;
Not with her least consent of will,
Which would my proud affection hurt,
But by the noble style that still
Imputes an unattained desert;
Because her gay and lofty brows,
When all is won which hope can ask,
Reflect a light of hopeless snows
That bright in virgin ether bask;
Because, though free of the outer court
I am, this Temple keeps its shrine
Sacred to heaven; because, in short,
She's not and never can be mine.

Coventry Patmore [1823-1896]

MY LOVE

Not as all other women are
Is she that to my soul is dear;
Her glorious fancies come from far,
Beneath the silver evening-star,
And yet her heart is ever near.

Great feelings hath she of her own,
Which lesser souls may never know;
God giveth them to her alone,
And sweet they are as any tone
Wherewith the wind may choose to blow.

Yet in herself she dwelleth not,
Although no home were half so fair;
No simplest duty is forgot,
Life hath no dim and lowly spot
That doth not in her sunshine share.

She doeth little kindnesses,
Which most leave undone, or despise:

For naught that sets one heart at ease,
And giveth happiness or peace,
Is low-esteemèd in her eyes.

She hath no scorn of common things,
And, though she seem of other birth,
Round us her heart intwines and clings,
And patiently she folds her wings
To tread the humble paths of earth.

Blessing she is: God made her so,
And deeds of week-day holiness
Fall from her noiseless as the snow,
Nor hath she ever chanced to know
That aught were easier than to bless.

She is most fair, and thereunto
Her life doth rightly harmonize;
Feeling or thought that was not true
Ne'er made less beautiful the blue
Unclouded heaven of her eyes.

She is a woman: one in whom
The spring-time of her childish years
Hath never lost its fresh perfume,
Though knowing well that life hath room
For many blights and many tears.

I love her with a love as still
As a broad river's peaceful might,
Which, by high tower and lowly mill,
Seems following its own wayward will,
And yet doth ever flow aright.

And, on its full, deep breast serene,
Like quiet isles my duties lie;
It flows around them and between,
And makes them fresh and fair and green,
Sweet homes wherein to live and die.

James Russell Lowell [1819-1891]

MARGARET TO DOLCINO

Ask if I love thee? Oh, smiles cannot tell
Plainer what tears are now showing too well.
Had I not loved thee, my sky had been clear:
Had I not loved thee, I had not been here,
Weeping by thee.

Ask if I love thee? How else could I borrow
Pride from man's slander, and strength from my sorrow?
Laugh when they sneer at the fanatic's bride,
Knowing no bliss, save to toil and abide
Weeping by thee.

Charles Kingsley [1819-1875]

DOLCINO TO MARGARET

THE world goes up and the world goes down,
And the sunshine follows the rain;
And yesterday's sneer, and yesterday's frown,
Can never come over again,
Sweet wife:
No, never come over again.

For woman is warm, though man be cold,
And the night will hallow the day;
Till the heart which at even was weary and old
Can rise in the morning gay,
Sweet wife;
To its work in the morning gay.

Charles Kingsley [1819-1875]

AT LAST

WHEN first the bride and bridegroom wed,
They love their single selves the best;
A sword is in the marriage bed,
Their separate slumbers are not rest.
They quarrel, and make up again,
They give and suffer worlds of pain.

Both right and wrong,
 They struggle long,
 Till some good day, when they are old,
 Some dark day, when the bells are tolled,
 Death having taken their best of life,
 They lose themselves, and find each other;
 They know that they are husband, wife,
 For, weeping, they are Father, Mother!

Richard Henry Stoddard [1825-1903]

THE WIFE TO HER HUSBAND

LINGER not long. Home is not home without thee:
 Its dearest tokens do but make me mourn.
 O, let its memory, like a chain about thee,
 Gently compel and hasten thy return!

Linger not long. Though crowds should woo thy staying,
 Bethink thee, can the mirth of thy friends, though dear,
 Compensate for the grief thy long delaying
 Costs the fond heart that sighs to have thee here?

Linger not long. How shall I watch thy coming,
 As evening shadows stretch o'er moor and dell;
 When the wild bee hath ceased her busy humming,
 And silence hangs on all things like a spell!

How shall I watch for thee, when fears grow stronger,
 As night grows dark and darker on the hill!
 How shall I weep, when I can watch no longer!
 Ah! art thou absent, art thou absent still?

Yet I shall grieve not, though the eye that seeth me
 Gazeth through tears that make its splendor dull;
 For oh! I sometimes fear when thou art with me,
 My cup of happiness is all too full.

Haste, haste thee home unto thy mountain dwelling,
 Haste, as a bird unto its peaceful nest!
 Haste, as a skiff, through tempests wide and swelling,
 Flies to its haven of securest rest!

Unknown

A WIFE'S SONG

O WELL I love the Spring,
 When the sweet, sweet hawthorn blows;
 And well I love the Summer,
 And the coming of the rose;
 But dearer are the changing leaf,
 And the year upon the wane,
 For O, they bring the blessed time
 That brings him home again.

November may be dreary,
 December's days may be
 As full of gloom to others
 As once they were to me;
 But O, to hear the tempest
 Beat loud against the pane!
 For the roaring wind and the blessed time
 That brings him home again.

William Cox Bennett [1820-1895]

THE SAILOR'S WIFE

AND are ye sure the news is true?
 And are ye sure he's weel?
 Is this a time to talk o' wark?
 Ye jauds, fling by your wheel!
 Is this a time to spin a thread,
 When Colin's at the door?
 Rax down my cloak—I'll to the quay,
 And see him come ashore.
 For there's nae luck aboot the house,
 There's nae luck ava',
 There's little pleasure in the house,
 When our gudeman's awa'.

 And gi'e to me my bigonet,
 My bishop's satin gown;
 For I maun tell the baillie's wife
 That Colin's in the town.

My Turkey slippers maun gae on,
 My stockins pearly blue;
 It's a' to pleasure our gudeman,
 For he's baith leal and true.

Rise, lass, and mak' a clean fireside,
 Put on the muckle pot;
 Gi'e little Kate her button gown,
 And Jock his Sunday coat.
 And mak' their shoon as black as slaes,
 Their hose as white as snaw;
 It's a' to please my own gudeman,
 He likes to see them braw.

There's twa hens upon the bauk,
 Hae fed this month and mair;
 Mak' haste and throw their necks about
 That Colin weel may fare!
 And spread the table neat and clean,
 Gar ilk a thing look braw;
 For wha can tell how Colin fared,
 When he was far awa'?

Sae true his heart, sae smooth his speech,
 His breath like caller air;
 His very foot has music in't
 As he comes up the stair.
 And will I see his face again,
 And will I hear him speak?
 I'm downright dizzy wi' the thought,
 In troth I'm like to greet!

If Colin's weel, and weel content,
 I ha'e nae mair to crave;
 And gin I live to keep him sae,
 I'm blest abune the lave.
 And will I see his face again,
 And will I hear him speak?
 I'm downright dizzy wi' the thought,
 In troth I'm like to greet!

For there's nae luck aboot the house,
There's nae luck ava';
There's little pleasure in the house
When our gudeman's awa'.

*William Julius Mickle [1735-1788]
(or Jean Adam (?) [1710-1765])*

JERRY AN' ME

No matter how the chances are,
Nor when the winds may blow,
My Jerry there has left the sea
With all its luck an' woe:
For who would try the sea at all,
Must try it luck or no.

They told him—Lor', men take no care
How words they speak may fall—
They told him blunt, he was too old,
Too slow with oar an' trawl,
An' this is how he left the sea
An' luck an' woe an' all.

Take any man on sea or land
Out of his beaten way,
If he is young 'twill do, but then,
If he is old an' gray,
A month will be a year to him.
Be all to him you may.

He sits by me, but mest he walks
The door-yard for a deck,
An' scans the boat a-goin' out
Till she becomes a speck,
Then turns away, his face as wet
As if she were a wreck.

I cannot bring him back again,
The days when we were wed.
But he shall never know—my man—
The lack o' love or bread,
While I can cast a stitch or fill
A needleful o' thread.

God pity me, I'd most forgot
 How many yet there be,
 Whose goodmen full as old as mine
 Are somewhere on the sea,
 Who hear the breakin' bar an' think
 O' Jerry home an'—me.

Hiram Rich [?]

"DON'T BE SORROWFUL, DARLING"

O DON'T be sorrowful, darling!
 And don't be sorrowful, pray;
 Taking the year together, my dear,
 There isn't more night than day.

'Tis rainy weather, my darling;
 Time's waves they heavily run;
 But taking the year together, my dear,
 There isn't more cloud than sun.

We are old folks now, my darling,
 Our heads are growing gray;
 But taking the year all round, my dear,
 You will always find the May.

We have had our May, my darling,
 And our roses long ago;
 And the time of the year is coming, my dear,
 For the silent night and the snow.

But God is God, my darling,
 Of the night as well as the day;
 And we feel and know that we can go
 Wherever He leads the way.

A God of the night, my darling,
 Of the night of death so grim;
 The gate that leads out of life, good wife,
 Is the gate that leads to Him.

Rembrandt Peale [1778-1860]

WINIFREDA

AWAY! let naught to love displeasing,
My Winifreda, move your care;
Let naught delay the heavenly blessing,
Nor squeamish pride, nor gloomy fear.

What though no grants of royal donors
With pompous titles grace our blood,
We'll shine in more substantial honors,
And, to be noble, we'll be good.

Our name, while virtue thus we tender,
Will sweetly sound where'er 'tis spoke;
And all the great ones, they shall wonder
How they respect such little folk.

What though, from fortune's lavish bounty,
No mighty treasures we possess;
We'll find, within our pittance, plenty,
And be content without excess.

Still shall each kind returning season
Sufficient for our wishes give;
For we will live a life of reason,
And that's the only life to live.

Through youth and age, in love excelling,
We'll hand in hand together tread;
Sweet-smiling peace shall crown our dwelling,
And babes, sweet-smiling babes, our bed.

How should I love the pretty creatures,
While round my knees they fondly clung!
To see them look their mother's features,
To hear them lisp their mother's tongue!

And when with envy time transported
Shall think to rob us of our joys,
You'll in your girls again be courted,
And I'll go wooing in my boys.

Unknown

AN OLD MAN'S IDYL

By the waters of Life we sat together,
Hand in hand, in the golden days
Of the beautiful early summer weather,
When skies were purple and breath was praise,
When the heart kept tune to the carol of birds,
And the birds kept tune to the songs which ran
Through shimmer of flowers on grassy swards,
And trees with voices æolian.

By the rivers of Life we walked together,
I and my darling, unafraid;
And lighter than any linnet's feather
The burdens of being on us weighed;
And Love's sweet miracles o'er us threw
Mantles of joy outlasting Time,
And up from the rosy morrows grew
A sound that seemed like a marriage chime.

In the gardens of Life we strayed together,
And the luscious apples were ripe and red,
And the languid lilac, and honeyed heather
Swooned with the fragrance which they shed;
And under the trees the angels walked,
And up in the air a sense of wings
Awed us tenderly while we talked
Softly in sacred communings.

In the meadows of Life we strayed together,
Watching the waving harvests grow,
And under the benison of the Father
Our hearts, like the lambs, skipped to and fro;
And the cowslip, hearing our low replies,
Broidered fairer the emerald banks,
And glad tears shone in the daisy's eyes,
And the timid violet glistened thanks.

Who was with us, and what was round us,
Neither myself nor my darling guessed;
Only we knew that something crowned us
Out from the heavens with crowns of rest;

Only we knew that something bright
Lingered lovingly where we stood,
Clothed with the incandescent light
Of something higher than humankind.

Oh, the riches Love doth inherit!
Oh, the alchemy which doth change
Dross of body and dregs of spirit
Into sanctities rare and strange!
My flesh is feeble, and dry, and old,
My darling's beautiful hair is gray;
But our elixir and precious gold
Laugh at the footsteps of decay.

Harms of the world have come unto us,
Cups of sorrow we yet shall drain;
But we have a secret which doth show us
Wonderful rainbows in the rain.
And we hear the tread of the years move by,
And the sun is setting behind the hills;
But my darling does not fear to die,
And I am happy in what God wills.

So we sit by our household fires together,
Dreaming the dreams of long ago;
Then it was balmy, sunny weather,
And now the valleys are laid in snow;
Icicles hang from the slippery eaves,
The wind blows cold,—'tis growing late;
Well, well! we have garnered all our sheaves,
I and my darling, and we wait.

Richard Realf [1834-1878]

THE POET'S SONG TO HIS WIFE

How many summers, love,
Have I been thine?
How many days, thou dove,
Hast thou been mine?

Time, like the wingèd wind
 When it bends the flowers,
 Hath left no mark behind,
 To count the hours.

Some weight of thought, though loth,
 On thee he leaves;
 Some lines of care round both
 Perhaps he weaves;
 Some fears,—a soft regret
 For joys scarce known;
 Sweet looks we half forget;—
 All else is flown!

Ah!—With what thankless heart
 I mourn and sing!
 Look, where our children start,
 Like sudden Spring!
 With tongues all sweet and low,
 Like a pleasant rhyme,
 They tell how much I owe
 To thee and Time!

Bryan Waller Procter [1787–1874]

JOHN ANDERSON

JOHN ANDERSON my jo, John,
 When we were first acquent
 Your locks were like the raven,
 Your bonnie brow was brent;
 But now your brow is bald, John,
 Your locks are like the snow;
 But blessings on your frosty pow,
 John Anderson my jo.

John Anderson my jo, John,
 We clamb the hill thegither,
 And mony a canty day, John,
 We've had wi' anither:

Now we maun totter down, John,
 But hand in hand we'll go,
 And sleep thegither at the foot,
 John Anderson my jo.

Robert Burns [1759-1796]

TO MARY

“THEE, Mary, with this ring I wed,
 So, fourteen years ago, I said—
 Behold another ring!—“For what?
 To wed thee o'er again—why not?”

With that first ring I married Youth,
 Grace, Beauty, Innocence, and Truth;
 Taste long admired, sense long revered,
 And all my Molly then appeared.
 If she, by merit since disclosed,
 Prove twice the woman I supposed,
 I plead that double merit now,
 To justify a double vow.

Here then, to-day, (with faith as sure,
 With ardor as intense and pure,
 As when, amidst the rites divine,
 I took thy troth, and plighted mine),
 To thee, sweet girl, my second ring
 A token, and a pledge, I bring;
 With this I wed, till death us part,
 Thy riper virtues to my heart;
 Those virtues, which, before untried,
 The wife has added to the bride;
 Those virtues, whose progressive claim,
 Endearing wedlock's very name,
 My soul enjoys, my song approves,
 For Conscience' sake, as well as Love's.

For why?—They show me every hour,
 Honor's high thought, Affection's power,
 Discretion's deed, sound Judgment's sentence,
 And teach me all things—but Repentance.

Samuel Bishop [1731-1795]

THE GOLDEN WEDDING

O LOVE, whose patient pilgrim feet
 Life's longest path have trod;
 Whose ministry hath symbolled sweet
 The dearer love of God;
 The sacred myrtle wreathes again
 Thine altar, as of old;
 And what was green with summer then,
 Is mellowed now to gold.

Not now, as then, the future's face
 Is flushed with fancy's light;
 But memory, with a milder grace,
 Shall rule the feast to-night.
 Blest was the sun of joy that shone,
 Nor less the blinding shower;
 The bud of fifty years agone
 Is love's perfected flower.

O memory, ope thy mystic door;
 O dream of youth, return;
 And let the light that gleamed of yore
 Beside this altar burn.
 The past is plain; 'twas love designed
 E'en sorrow's iron chain;
 And mercy's shining thread has twined
 With the dark warp of pain.

So be it still. O Thou who hast
 That younger bridal blest,
 Till the May-morn of love has passed
 To evening's golden west;
 Come to this later Cana, Lord,
 And, at thy touch divine,
 The water of that earlier board
 To-night shall turn to wine.

David Gray [1837-1888]

MOGGY AND ME

OH wha are sae happy as me an' my Moggy?

 Oh wha are sae happy as Moggy an' me?

We're baith turnin' auld, an' our walth is soon tauld,

 But contentment bides aye in our cottage sae wee.

She toils a' the day when I'm out wi' the hirsel,

 An' chants to the bairns while I sing on the brae;

An' aye her blithe smile welcomes me frae my toil,

 When down the glen I come weary an' wae.

Aboon our auld heads we've a nice little biggin,

 That keeps out the cauld when the simmer's awa;

We've twa webs o' linen o' Moggy's ain spinnin',

 As thick as silk velvet and white as the snaw;

We've kye in the byre, an' yauds in the stable,

 A grumphie sae fat that she hardly can stand;

An' something, I guess, in yon auld painted press

 To cheer up the speerits an' steady the hand.

'Tis true we hae had mony sorrows an' crosses,

 Our pouches oft toom, an' our hearts fu' o' care;

But wi' a' our crosses, our sorrows an' losses,

 Contentment, thank heaven! has aye been our share.

I've an auld roostit sword that was left by my father,

 Whilk aye has been drawn when my king had a fac';

We hae friends ane or twa that aft gie us a ca',

 To laugh when we're happy or grieve when we're wae.

Our duke may hae gowd mair than schoolmen can reckon,

 An' flunkies to watch ilka glance o' his e'e,

His lady aye braw sittin' prim in her ha' ;

 But are they sae happy as Moggy an' me?

A' ye wha ne'er fand the straight road to be happy,

 Wha are nae content wi' the lot that ye dree,

Come down to the dwellin' o' whilk I've been tellin',

 You'll learn it by lookin' at Moggy an' me.

James Hogg [1770-1835]

"O, LAY THY HAND IN MINE, DEAR!"

O, lay thy hand in mine, dear!
 We're growing old;
 But Time hath brought no sign, dear,
 That hearts grow cold.
 'Tis long, long since our new love
 Made life divine;
 But age enricheth true love,
 Like noble wine.

And lay thy cheek to mine, dear,
 And take thy rest;
 Mine arms around thee twine, dear,
 And make thy nest.
 A many cares are pressing
 On this dear head;
 But Sorrow's hands in blessing
 Are surely laid.

O, lean thy life on mine, dear!
 'Twill shelter thee.
 Thou wert a winsome vine, dear,
 On my young tree:
 And so, till boughs are leafless,
 And songbirds flown,
 We'll twine, then lay us, griefless,
 Together down.

Gerald Massey [1828-1907]

WIFE, CHILDREN, AND FRIENDS

WHEN the black-lettered list to the gods was presented
 (The list of what Fate for each mortal intends),
 At the long string of ills a kind goddess relented,
 And slipped in three blessings,—wife, children, and
 friends.

In vain surly Pluto maintained he was cheated,
 For justice divine could not compass its ends;
 The scheme of man's penance he swore was defeated,
 For earth becomes heaven with—wife, children, and friends.

If the stock of our bliss is in stranger hands vested,
 The fund, ill secured, oft in bankruptcy ends;
 But the heart issues bills which are never protested,
 When drawn on the firm of—wife, children, and friends.

Though valor still glows in his life's dying embers,
 The death-wounded tar, who his colors defends,
 Drops a tear of regret as he dying remembers
 How blessed was his home with—wife, children, and friends.

The soldier, whose deeds live immortal in story,
 Whom duty to far distant latitudes sends,
 With transport would barter whole ages of glory
 For one happy day with—wife, children, and friends.

Though spice-breathing gales on his caravan hover,
 Though for him all Arabia's fragrance ascends,
 The merchant still thinks of the woodbines that cover
 The bower where he sat with—wife, children, and friends.

The dayspring of youth, still unclouded by sorrow,
 Alone on itself for enjoyment depends;
 But drear is the twilight of age, if it borrow
 No warmth from the smile of—wife, children, and friends.

Let the breath of renown ever freshen and nourish
 The laurel which o'er the dead favorite bends;
 O'er me wave the willow, and long may it flourish,
 Bedewed with the tears of—wife, children, and friends.

Let us drink, for my song, growing graver and graver,
 To subjects too solemn insensibly tends;
 Let us drink, pledge me high, love and virtue shall flavor
 The glass which I fill to—wife, children, and friends.

William Robert Spencer [1769-1834]

LOVE SONNETS

SONNETS

From "Amoretti"

III

THE sovereign beauty which I do admire,
Witness the world how worthy to be praised!
The light whereof hath kindled heavenly fire
In my frail spirit, by her from baseness raised;
That being now with her huge brightness dazed,
Base thing I can no more endure to view:
But, looking still on her, I stand amazed
At wondrous sight of so celestial hue.
So when my tongue would speak her praises due,
It stoppèd is with thought's astonishment;
And when my pen would write her titles true,
It ravished is with fancy's wonderment:
Yet in my heart I then both speak and write
The wonder that my wit cannot indite.

VIII

More than most fair, full of the living fire
Kindled above unto the Maker near;
No eyes but joys, in which all powers conspire
That to the world naught else be counted dear;
Through your bright beams doth not the blinded guest
Shoot out his darts to base affections wound;
But angels come to lead frail minds to rest
In chaste desires, on heavenly beauty bound.
You frame my thoughts, and fashion me within;
You stop my tongue, and teach my heart to speak;
You calm the storm that passion did begin,
Strong through your cause, but by your virtue weak.
Dark is the world, where your light shinèd never;
Well is he born that may behold you ever.

XXIV

When I behold that beauty's wonderment,
And rare perfection of each goodly part,
Of Nature's still the only complement,
I honor and admire the Maker's art.
But when I feel the bitter baleful smart
Which her fair eyes un'wares do work in me,
That death out of their shiny beams do dart,
I think that I a new Pandora see,
Whom all the gods in council did agree
Into this sinful world from heaven to send,
That she to wicked men a scourge should be,
For all their faults with which they did offend.
But since ye are my scourge, I will entreat
That for my faults ye will me gently beat.

XXXIV

Like as a ship, that through the ocean wide,
By conduct of some star doth make her way,
Whenas a storm hath dimmed her trusty guide,
Out of her course doth wander far astray;
So I, whose star, that wont with her bright ray
Me to direct, with clouds is overcast,
Do wander now, in darkness and dismay,
Through hidden perils round about me placed;
Yet hope I well that, when this storm is past,
My Helicè, the lodestar of my life,
Will shine again, and look on me at last,
With lovely light to clear my cloudy grief:
Till then I wander care-full, comfortless,
In secret sorrow, and sad pensiveness.

LV

So oft as I her beauty do behold,
And therewith do her cruelty compare,
I marvel of what substance was the mould,
The which her made at once so cruel fair;
Not earth, for her high thoughts more heavenly are;
Not water, for her love doth burn like fire;

Not air, for she is not so light or rare;
 Not fire, for she doth freeze with faint desire.
 Then needs another element inquire
 Whereof she might be made—that is, the sky;
 For to the heaven her haughty looks aspire,
 And eke her mind is pure immortal high.

Then, since to heaven ye likened are the best,
 Be like in mercy as in all the rest.

LXVIII

Most glorious Lord of Life! that on this day
 Didst make thy triumph over death and sin,
 And, having harrowed hell, didst bring away
 Captivity thence captive, us to win,
 This joyous day, dear Lord, with joy begin;
 And grant that we, for whom thou diddest die,
 Being with thy dear blood clean washed from sin,
 May live forever in felicity;
 And that thy love we weighing worthily,
 May likewise love thee for the same again,
 And for thy sake, that all 'like dear didst buy,
 With love may one another entertain!

So let us love, dear Love, like as we ought:
 Love is the lesson which the Lord us taught.

LXX

Fresh Spring, the herald of love's mighty king,
 In whose coat-armor richly are displayed
 All sorts of flowers the which on earth do spring
 In goodly colors gloriously arrayed;
 Go to my love, where she is careless laid,
 Yet in her winter's bower not well awake;
 Tell her the joyous time will not be stayed,
 Unless she do him by the forelock take;
 Bid her therefore herself soon ready make
 To wait on Love amongst his lovely crew;
 Where everyone that misseth then her mate
 Shall be by him amerced with penance due.

Make haste, therefore, sweet love, whilst it is prime;
 For none can call again the passèd time.

LXXV

One day I wrote her name upon the strand,
 But came the waves and washèd it away:
 Again I wrote it with a second hand,
 But came the tide and made my pains his prey.
 "Vain man," said she, "that dost in vain essay
 A mortal thing so to immortalize;
 For I myself shall like to this decay,
 And eke my name be wipèd out likewise."
 "Not so," quoth I; "let baser things devise
 To die in dust, but you shall live by fame;
 My verse your virtues rare shall eternize,
 And in the heavens write your glorious name:

Where, whenas Death shall all the world subdue,
 Our love shall live, and later life renew."

LXXIX

Men call you fair, and you do credit it,
 For that yourself ye daily such do see:
 But the true fair, that is the gentle wit
 And virtuous mind, is much more praised of me:
 For all the rest, however fair it be,
 Shall turn to naught and lose that glorious hue;
 But only that is permanent and free
 From frail corruption that doth flesh ensue.
 That is true beauty; that doth argue you
 To be divine, and born of heavenly seed;
 Derived from that fair Spirit from whom all true
 And perfect beauty did at first proceed:
 He only fair, and what he fair hath made;
 All other fair, like flowers, untimely fade.

Edmund Spenser [1552?–1599]

SONNETS

From "Astrophel and Stella"

I

Loving in truth, and fain in verse my love to show,
 That She, dear She! might take some pleasure of my pain;
 Pleasure might cause her read, reading might make her know,
 Knowledge might pity win, and pity grace obtain:

I sought fit words to paint the blackest face of woe,
 Studying inventions fine, her wits to entertain;
 Oft turning others' leaves, to see if thence would flow
 Some fresh and fruitful showers upon my sunburnt brain:
 But words came halting forth, wanting Invention's stay.
 Invention, Nature's child, fled step-dame Study's blows;
 And others' feet still seemed but strangers in my way.
 Thus, great with child to speak, and helpless in my throes,
 Biting my truant pen, beating myself for spite:
 "Fool!" said my Muse to me, "look in thy heart, and write!"

XXXI

With how sad steps, O Moon, thou climb'st the skies!
 How silently, and with how wan a face!
 What! may it be that even in heavenly place
 That busy archer his sharp arrows tries?
 Sure, if that long-with-love-acquainted eyes
 Can judge of love, thou feel'st a lover's case;
 I read it in thy looks. Thy languished grace
 To me, that feel the like, thy state descries.
 Then, even of fellowship, O Moon, tell me,
 Is constant love deemed there but want of wit?
 Are beauties there as proud as here they be?
 Do they above love to be loved, and yet
 Those lovers scorn whom that love doth possess?
 Do they call virtue there, ungratefulness?

XXXIX

Come Sleep! O Sleep, the certain knot of peace,
 The baiting-place of wit, the balm of woe,
 The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,
 The indifferent judge between the high and low!
 With shield of proof, shield me from out the press
 Of those fierce darts Despair at me doth throw:
 O make in me those civil wars to cease!
 I will good tribute pay if thou do so.
 Take thou of me, smooth pillows, sweetest bed,
 A chamber deaf to noise and blind to light,
 A rosy garland, and a weary head:
 And if these things, as being thine in right,

Move not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in me,
Livelier than elsewhere, Stella's image see.

LXII

Late tired with woe, even ready for to pine
With rage of love, I called my Love unkind;
She in whose eyes love, though unfelt, doth shine,
Sweet said that I true love in her should find.
I joyed; but straight thus watered was my wine,
That love she did, but loved a love not blind;
Which would not let me, whom she loved, decline
From nobler cause, fit for my birth and mind:
And therefore, by her love's authority,
Willed me these tempests of vain love to fly,
And anchor fast myself on Virtue's shore.
Alas, if this the only metal be
Of love new-coined to help my beggary,
Dear! love me not, that ye may love me more!

LXIV

No more, my Dear, no more these counsels try;
O give my passions leave to run their race!
Let Fortune lay on me her worst disgrace;
Let folk o'ercharged with brain, against me cry;
Let clouds bedim my face, break in mine eye;
Let me no steps but of lost labor trace;
Let all the earth with scorn recount my case;
But do not will me from my love to fly!
I do not envy Aristotle's wit;
Nor do aspire to Caesar's bleeding fame;
Nor aught do care, though some above me sit;
Nor hope, nor wish another course to frame,
But that which once may win thy cruel heart:
Thou art my Wit, and thou my Virtue art.

LXXIII

Love still a boy and oft a wanton is,
Schooled only by his mother's tender eye;
What wonder, then, if he his lesson miss,
When for so soft a rod dear play he try?

And yet my Star, because a sugared kiss
 In sport I sucked while she asleep did lie,
 Doth lower, nay chide, nay threat, for only this.—
 Sweet, it was saucy Love, not humble I!
 But no 'scuse serves; she makes her wrath appear
 In Beauty's throne; see now, who dares come near
 Those scarlet judges, threatening bloody pain!
 O heavenly fool, thy most kiss-worthy face
 Anger invests with such a lovely grace,
 That Anger's self I needs must kiss again.

CIII

O happy Thames that didst my Stella bear!
 I saw thee with full many a smiling line
 Upon thy cheerful face, Joy's livery wear,
 While those fair planets on thy streams did shine.
 The boat for joy could not to dance forbear;
 While wanton winds, with beauties so divine,
 Ravished, stayed not, till in her golden hair
 They did themselves, (O sweetest prison!) twine.
 And fain those Æol's youths there would their stay
 Have made, but forced by Nature still to fly,
 First did with puffing kiss those locks display.
 She so dishevelled, blushed. From window, I,
 With sight thereof, cried out, "O fair disgrace!
 Let Honor's self to thee grant highest place!"

CVII

Stella! since thou so right a Princess art
 Of all the powers which life bestows on me,
 That ere by them aught undertaken be,
 They first resort unto that sovereign part;
 Sweet! for a while give respite to my heart,
 Which pants as though it still should leap to thee;
 And on my thoughts give thy lieutenancy
 To this great cause, which needs both use and art.
 And as a Queen, who from her presence sends
 Whom she employs, dismiss from thee my wit,
 Till it have wrought what thy own will attends:
 On servants' shame oft master's blame doth sit.

O, let not fools in me thy works reprove,
And scorning, say, "See what it is to love!"
Philip Sidney [1554-1586]

SONNETS

From "To Delia"

VI

FAIR is my Love, and cruel as she's fair:
Her brow shades frowns, although her eyes are sunny;
Her smiles are lightning, though her pride despair,
And her disdains are gall, her favors honey.
A modest maid, decked with a blush of honor,
Whose feet do tread green paths of youth and love;
The wonder of all eyes that look upon her,
Sacred on earth, designed a Saint above.
Chastity and Beauty, which were deadly foes,
Live reconcilèd friends within her brow;
And had she Pity to conjoin with those,
Then who had heard the plaints I utter now?
O had she not been fair, and thus unkind,
My Muse had slept, and none had known my mind.

XII

My spotless love hovers, with purest wings,
About the temple of the proudest frame,
Where blaze those lights, fairest of earthly things,
Which clear our clouded world with brightest flame.
My ambitious thoughts, confinèd in her face,
Affect no honor but what she can give;
My hopes do rest in limits of her grace;
I weigh no comfort, unless she relieve.
For she, that can my heart imparadise,
Holds in her fairest hand what dearest is.
My Fortune's Wheel's the Circle of her Eyes,
Whose rolling grace deign once a turn of bliss!
All my life's sweet consists in her alone;
So much I love the most unloving one.

XXX

And yet I cannot reprehend the flight
 Or blame the attempt, presuming so to soar;
 The mounting venture, for a high delight,
 Did make the honor of the fall the more.
 For who gets wealth, that puts not from the shore?
 Danger hath honor; great designs, their fame;
 Glory doth follow, courage goes before;
 And though the event oft answers not the same,
 Suffice that high attempts have never shame.
 The Mean-observer (whom base safety keeps)
 Lives without honor, dies without a name,
 And in eternal darkness ever sleeps.

And therefore, Delia! 'tis to me no blot
 To have attempted, though attained thee not.

XXXVI

When men shall find thy flower, thy glory pass,
 And thou, with careful brow, sitting alone,
 Receivèd hast this message from thy glass,
 That tells the truth, and says that *All is gone*;
 Fresh shalt thou see in me the wounds thou madest,
 Though spent thy flame, in me the heat remaining:
 I that have loved thee thus before thou fadest,
 My faith shall wax, when thou art in thy waning!
 The world shall find this miracle in me,
 That fire can burn when all the matter's spent:
 Then what my faith hath been, thyself shalt see,
 And that thou wast unkind, thou may'st repent!

Thou may'st repent that thou hast scorned my tears,
 When Winter snows upon thy golden hairs.

XXXIX

Look, Delia, how we esteem the half-blown rose
 The image of thy blush, and Summer's honor!
 Whilst yet her tender bud doth undisclose
 That full of beauty Time bestows upon her.
 No sooner spreads her glory in the air
 But straight her wide-blown pomp comes to decline;

She then is scorned that late adorned the fair;
So fade the roses of those cheeks of thine.
No April can revive thy withered flowers
Whose springing grace adorns thy glory now;
Swift, speedy Time, feathered with flying hours,
Dissolves the beauty of the fairest brow.

Then do not thou such treasure waste in vain,
But love now, whilst thou may'st be loved again.

XLV

Beauty, sweet Love, is like the morning dew,
Whose short refresh upon the tender green
Cheers for a time, but till the sun doth show:
And straight 'tis gone, as it had never been.
Soon doth it fade, that makes the fairest flourish;
Short is the glory of the blushing rose:
The hue which thou so carefully dost nourish,
Yet which, at length, thou must be forced to lose.
When thou, surcharged with burthen of thy years,
Shalt bend thy wrinkles homeward to the earth;
When Time hath made a passport for thy fears,
Dated in Age, the Calends of our Death:

But ah, no more! This hath been often told;
And women grieve to think they must be old.

XLVI

I must not grieve my Love, whose eyes would read
Lines of delight, whereon her youth might smile!
Flowers have a time, before they come to seed;
And she is young, and now must sport the while.
And sport, Sweet Maid, in season of these years,
And learn to gather flowers before they wither!
And where the sweetest blossom first appears,
Let Love and Youth conduct thy pleasures thither!
Lighten forth smiles to clear the clouded air,
And calm the tempest which my sighs do raise!
Pity and smiles do best become the fair;
Pity and smiles shall yield thee lasting praise.

I hope to say, when all my griefs are gone,
“Happy the heart that sighed for such a one!”

L

Let others sing of Knights and Paladines
 In aged accents and untimely words,
 Paint shadows in imaginary lines,
 Which well the reach of their high wit records:
 But I must sing of Thee, and those fair eyes!
 Authentic shall my verse in time to come,
 When the yet unborn shall say, *Lo, where she lies!*
Whose beauty made him speak, that else was dumb!
 These are the arks, the trophies I erect,
 That fortify thy name against old age;
 And these thy sacred virtues must protect
 Against the Dark, and Time's consuming rage.

Though the error of my youth in them appear,
 Suffice, they show'd I lived, and loved thee dear.

LI

Care-charmer Sleep, son of the sable Night,
 Brother to Death, in silent darkness born:
 Relieve my languish, and restore the light;
 With dark forgetting of my care, return!
 And let the day be time enough to mourn
 The shipwreck of my ill-adventured youth:
 Let waking eyes suffice to wail their scorn,
 Without the torment of the night's untruth.
 Cease, dreams, the images of day-desires,
 To model forth the passions of the morrow;
 Never let rising sun approve you liars,
 To add more grief to aggravate my sorrow.
 Still let me sleep, embracing clouds in vain;
 And never wake to feel the day's disdain.

Samuel Daniel [1562-1619]

SONNETS

From "Idea"

TO THE READER OF THESE SONNETS

INTO these Loves, who but for Passion looks,
 At this first sight, here let him lay them by,
 And seek elsewhere in turning other books,
 Which better may his labor satisfy.

No far-fetched sigh shall ever wound my breast;
Love from mine eye a tear shall never wring;
Nor in "Ah me's!" my whining sonnets dressed!
A libertine, fantastically I sing!
My verse is the true image of my mind,
Ever in motion, still desiring change;
And as thus, to variety inclined,
So in all humors sportively I range!
My Muse is rightly of the English strain,
That cannot long one fashion entertain.

IV

Bright Star of Beauty! on whose eyelids sit
A thousand nymph-like and enamored Graces,
The Goddesses of Memory and Wit,
Which there in order take their several places;
In whose dear bosom, sweet delicious Love
Lays down his quiver, which he once did bear,
Since he that blessed paradise did prove;
And leaves his mother's lap, to sport him there.
Let others strive to entertain with words!
My soul is of a braver mettle made:
I hold that vile, which vulgar wit affords,
In me's that faith which Time cannot invade!
Let what I praise be still made good by you!
Be you most worthy, whilst I am most true!

XX

An evil Spirit (your Beauty) haunts me still,
Wherewith, alas, I have been long possessed;
Which ceaseth not to attempt me to each ill,
Nor give me once, but one poor minute's rest.
In me it speaks, whether I sleep or wake;
And when by means to drive it out I try,
With greater torments then it me doth take,
And tortures me in most extremity.
Before my face, it lays down my despairs,
And hastens me on unto a sudden death;
Now tempting me, to drown myself in tears,
And then in sighing to give up my breath.

Thus am I still provoked to every evil,
By this good-wicked Spirit, sweet Angel-Devil.

XXXVII

Dear! why should you command me to my rest,
When now the night doth summon all to sleep?
Methinks this time becometh lovers best!
Night was ordained together friends to keep.
How happy are all other living things,
Which, through the day, disjoined by several flight,
The quiet evening yet together brings,
And each returns unto his Love at night!
O thou that art so courteous else to all,
Why shouldst thou, Night, abuse me only thus!
That every creature to his kind doth call,
And yet 'tis thou dost only sever us?
Well could I wish it would be ever day,
If, when night comes, you bid me go away!

XL

My heart the Anvil where my thoughts do beat;
My words the Hammers fashioning my Desire;
My breast the Forge including all the heat,
Love is the Fuel which maintains the fire.
My sighs the Bellows which the flame increaseth,
Filling mine ears with noise and nightly groaning.
Toiling with pain, my labor never ceaseth;
In grievous Passions, my woes still bemoaning.
My eyes with tears against the fire striving,
Whose scorching glede my heart to cinders turneth:
But with those drops, the flame again reviving
Still more and more it to my torment burneth.
With Sisyphus thus do I roll the stone,
And turn the wheel with damned Ixion.

XLII

How many paltry, foolish, painted things,
That now in coaches trouble every street,
Shall be forgotten, whom no poet sings,
Ere they be well wrapped in their winding-sheet?

Where I to thee eternity shall give,
 When nothing else remaineth of these days,
 And queens hereafter shall be glad to live
 Upon the alms of thy superfluous praise;
 Virgins and matrons reading these my rhymes,
 Shall be so much delighted with thy story,
 That they shall grieve they lived not in these times,
 To have seen thee, their sex's only glory:
 So shalt thou fly above the vulgar throng,
 Still to survive in my immortal song.

LXI

Since there's no help, come, let us kiss and part!
 Nay, I have done. You get no more of me!
 And I am glad, yea, glad with all my heart,
 That thus so cleanly I myself can free.
 Shake hands for ever! Cancel all our vows!
 And when we meet at any time again,
 Be it not seen in either of our brows
 That we one jot of former love retain.
 Now at the last gasp of Love's latest breath,
 When, his pulse failing, Passion speechless lies,
 When Faith is kneeling by his bed of death,
 And Innocence is closing up his eyes:
 Now, if thou wouldest, when all have given him over,
 From death to life thou might'st him yet recover!

Michael Drayton [1563-1631]

SONNETS

From "Diana"

IX

My Lady's presence makes the Roses red,
 Because to see her lips they blush for shame.
 The Lily's leaves, for envy, pale became;
 And her white hands in them this envy bred.
 The Marigold the leaves abroad doth spread,
 Because the sun's and her power is the same.
 The Violet of purple color came,
 Dyed in the blood she made my heart to shed.

In brief, all flowers from her their virtue take;
 From her sweet breath, their sweet smells do proceed;
 The living heat which her eyebeams doth make
 Warmeth the ground, and quickeneth the seed.
 The rain, wherewith she watereth the flowers,
 Falls from mine eyes, which she dissolves in showers.

LXII

To live in hell, and heaven to behold;
 To welcome life, and die a living death;
 To sweat with heat, and yet be freezing cold;
 To grasp at stars, and lie the earth beneath;
 To tread a maze that never shall have end;
 To burn in sighs, and starve in daily tears;
 To climb a hill, and never to descend;
 Giants to kill, and quake at childish fears;
 To pine for food, and watch the Hesperian tree;
 To thirst for drink, and nectar still to draw;
 To live accurst, whom men hold blest to be;
 And weep those wrongs which never creature saw;
 If this be love, if love in these be founded,
 My heart is love, for these in it are grounded.

Henry Constable (?) [1562-1613]

SONNETS

xviii

SHALL I compare thee to a Summer's day?
 Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
 Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
 And Summer's lease hath all too short a date:
 Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
 And often is his gold complexion dimmed;
 And every fair from fair sometime declines,
 By chance or nature's changing course untrimmed:
 But thy eternal Summer shall not fade
 Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;
 Nor shall Death brag thou wanderest in his shade,
 When in eternal lines to time thou growest:

So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

XXIII

As an unperfect actor on the stage,
Who with his fear is put besides his part,
Or some fierce thing replete with too much rage,
Whose strength's abundance weakens his own heart;
So I, for fear of trust, forget to say
The perfect ceremony of love's rite,
And in mine own love's strength seem to decay,
O'ercharged with burden of mine own love's might.
O, let my books be then the eloquence
And dumb presagers of my speaking breast;
Who plead for love, and look for recompense,
More than that tongue that more hath more expressed.
O, learn to read what silent love hath writ:
To hear with eyes belongs to love's fine wit.

XXIX

When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,
I all alone beweep my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
And look upon myself, and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,
Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
Haply I think on thee: and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate:
For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

XXX

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste:

Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,
 For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
 And weep afresh love's long-since cancelled woe,
 And moan the expense of many a vanished sight:
 Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
 And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
 The sad account of fore-bemoanèd moan,
 Which I new pay as if not paid before:
 But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
 All losses are restored, and sorrows end.

xxxii

If thou survive my well-contented day
 When that churl Death my bones with dust shall cover,
 And shalt by fortune once more re-survey
 These poor rude lines of thy deceased lover,
 Compare them with the bettering of the time,
 And though they be outstripped by every pen,
 Reserve them for my love, not for their rhyme,
 Exceeded by the height of happier men.
 O, then vouchsafe me but this loving thought:
 "Had my friend's Muse grown with this growing age,
 A dearer birth than this his love had brought,
 To march in ranks of better equipage:
 • But since he died, and poets better prove,
 Theirs for their style I'll read, his for his love."

xxxiii

Full many a glorious morning have I seen
 Flatter the mountain-tops with sovereign eye,
 Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
 Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy.
 Anon permit the basest clouds to ride
 With ugly rack on his celestial face,
 And from the forlorn world his visage hide,
 Stealing unseen to west with this disgrace:
 Even so my sun one early morn did shine
 With all-triumphant splendor on my brow;
 But out, alack! he was but one hour mine,
 The region cloud hath masked him from me now.

Yet him for this my love no whit disdaineth;
 Suns of the world may stain when heaven's sun staineth.

LX

Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore,
 So do our minutes hasten to their end;
 Each changing place with that which goes before,
 In sequent toil all forwards do contend.
 Nativity, once in the main of light,
 Crawls to maturity, wherewith being crowned,
 Crooked eclipses 'gainst his glory fight,
 And Time that gave, doth now his gift confound.
 Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth,
 And delves the parallels in beauty's brow;
 Feeds on the rarities of nature's truth,
 And nothing stands but for his scythe to mow:
 And yet, to times in hope, my verse shall stand
 Praising thy worth, despite his cruel hand.

LXXI

No longer mourn for me when I am dead,
 Than you shall hear the surly, sullen bell
 Give warning to the world that I am fled
 From this vile world, with vilest worms to dwell:
 Nay, if you read this line, remember not
 The hand that writ it; for I love you so,
 That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot,
 If thinking on me then should make you woe.
 O, if (I say) you look upon this verse,
 When I perhaps compounded am with clay,
 Do not so much as my poor name rehearse,
 But let your love even with my life decay;
 Lest the wise world should look into your moan,
 And mock you with me after I am gone.

LXXIII

That time of year thou may'st in me behold
 When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
 Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
 Bare ruined choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.

In me thou see'st the twilight of such day
 As after sunset fadeth in the west,
 Which by and by black night doth take away,
 Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.
 In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire
 That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
 As the death-bed whereon it must expire,
 Consumed with that which it was nourished by.

This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong
 To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

CIV

To me, fair friend, you never can be old;
 For as you were when first your eye I eyed,
 Such seems your beauty still. Three Winters cold
 Have from the forests shook three Summers' pride;
 Three beauteous Springs to yellow Autumn turned
 In process of the seasons have I seen,
 Three April perfumes in three hot Junes burned,
 Since first I saw you fresh, which yet are green.
 Ah! yet doth beauty, like a dial-hand,
 Steal from his figure, and no pace perceived;
 So your sweet hue, which methinks still doth stand,
 Hath motion, and mine eye may be deceived:
 For fear of which, hear this, thou age unbred:
 Ere you were born was beauty's Summer dead.

CVI

When in the chronicle of wasted time
 I see descriptions of the fairest wights,
 And beauty making beautiful old rhyme
 In praise of ladies dead, and lovely knights;
 Then in the blazon of sweet beauty's best
 Of hand, of foot, of lip, of eye, of brow,
 I see their antique pen would have expressed
 Even such a beauty as you master now.
 So all their praises are but prophecies
 Of this our time, all, you prefiguring;
 And, for they looked but with divining eyes,
 They had not skill enough your worth to sing:

For we, which now behold these present days,
Have eyes to wonder, but lack tongues to praise.

CIX

O, never say that I was false of heart
Though absence seemed my flame to qualify:
As easy might I from myself depart
As from my soul, which in thy breast doth lie;
That is my home of love; if I have ranged,
Like him that travels, I return again,
Just to the time, not with the time exchanged,
So that myself bring water for my stain.
Never believe, though in my nature reigned
All frailties that besiege all kinds of blood,
That it could so preposterously be stained
To leave for nothing all thy sum of good!

For nothing this wide universe I call,
Save thou, my rose: in it thou art my all.

CXVI

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O, no! it is an ever-fixed mark
That looks on tempests, and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom:

If this be error, and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

CXXX

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
Coral is far more red than her lips' red;
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.

I have seen roses damasked, red and white,
 But no such roses see I in her cheeks;
 And in some perfumes is there more delight
 Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.
 I love to hear her speak,—yet well I know
 That music hath a far more pleasing sound;
 I grant I never saw a goddess go,—
 My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground:
 And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare
 As any she belied with false compare.

CXLVI

Poor soul, the centre of my sinful earth,
 Pressed by these rebel powers that thee array,
 Why dost thou pine within and suffer dearth,
 Painting thy outward walls so costly gay?
 Why so large cost, having so short a lease,
 Dost thou upon thy fading mansion spend?
 Shall worms, inheritors of this excess,
 Eat up thy charge? Is this thy body's end?
 Then, soul, live thou upon thy servant's loss,
 And let that pine to aggravate thy store;
 Buy terms divine in selling hours of dross;
 Within be fed, without be rich no more:
 So shalt thou feed on Death, that feeds on men;
 And Death once dead, there's no more dying then.

William Shakespeare [1564-1616]

“ALEXIS, HERE SHE STAYED”

ALEXIS, here she stayed; among these pines,
 Sweet hermitress, she did alone repair;
 Here did she spread the treasure of her hair,
 More rich than that brought from the Colchian mines.
 She set her by these muskèd eglantines,
 The happy place the print seems yet to bear;
 Her voice did sweeten here thy sugared lines,
 To which winds, trees, beasts, birds, did lend their ear.

Me here she first perceived, and here a morn
 Of bright carnations did o'erspread her face;
 Here did she sigh, here first my hopes were born,
 And I first got a pledge of promised grace:

But, ah! what served it to be happy so,
 Since passed pleasures double but new woe?

William Drummond [1585-1649]

"WERE I AS BASE AS IS THE LOWLY PLAIN"

WERE I as base as is the lowly plain,
 And you, my love, as high as heaven above,
 Yet should the thoughts of me, your humble swain,
 Ascend to heaven in honor of my love.
 Were I as high as heaven above the plain,
 And you, my love, as humble and as low
 As are the deepest bottoms of the main,
 Wheresoe'er you were, with you my love should go.
 Were you the earth, dear love, and I the skies,
 My love should shine on you, like to the sun,
 And look upon you with ten thousand eyes,
 Till heaven waxed blind and till the world were done.

Wheresoe'er I am,—below, or else above you,—
 Wheresoe'er you are, my heart shall truly love you.

Joshua Sylvester [1563-1618]

A SONNET OF THE MOON

Look how the pale Queen of the silent night
 Doth cause the ocean to attend upon her,
 And he, as long as she is in his sight,
 With his full tide is ready her to honor:
 But when the silver wagon of the Moon
 Is mounted up so high he cannot follow,
 The sea calls home his crystal waves to moan,
 And with low ebb doth manifest his sorrow.
 So you that are the sovereign of my heart,
 Have all my joys attending on your will,
 My joys low-ebbing when you do depart,
 When you return, their tide my heart doth fill.

So as you come, and as you do depart,
Joys ebb and flow within my tender heart.

Charles Best [fl. 1602]

TO MARY UNWIN

MARY! I want a lyre with other strings,
Such aid from Heaven as some have feigned they drew,
An eloquence scarce given to mortals, new
And undebased by praise of meaner things;
That, ere through age or woe I shed my wings,
I may record thy worth with honor due,
In verse as musical as thou art true,
And that immortalizes whom it sings:
But thou hast little need. There is a Book
By seraphs writ with beams of heavenly light,
On which the eyes of God not rarely look,
A chronicle of actions just and bright:
There all thy deeds, my faithful Mary, shine;
And, since thou own'st that praise, I spare thee mine.

William Cowper [1731-1800]

"WHY ART THOU SILENT"

WHY art thou silent? Is thy love a plant
Of such weak fibre that the treacherous air
Of absence withers what was once so fair?
Is there no debt to pay, no boon to grant?
Yet have my thoughts for thee been vigilant,
Bound to thy service with unceasing care—
The mind's least generous wish a mendicant
For naught but what thy happiness could spare.
Speak!—though this soft warm heart, once free to hold
A thousand tender pleasures, thine and mine,
Be left more desolate, more dreary cold
Than a forsaken bird's-nest filled with snow
'Mid its own bush of leafless eglantine—
Speak, that my torturing doubts their end may know!

William Wordsworth [1770-1850]

SONNETS

From "The House of Life"

IV

LOVESIGHT

WHEN do I see thee most, belovèd one?
 When in the light the spirits of mine eyes
 Before thy face, their altar, solemnize
 The worship of that Love through thee made known?
 Or when in the dusk hours, (we two alone,)
 Close-kissed and eloquent of still replies
 Thy twilight-hidden glimmering visage lies,
 And my soul only sees thy soul its own?
 O love, my love! if I no more should see
 Thyself, nor on the earth the shadow of thee,
 Nor image of thine eyes in any spring,—
 How then should sound upon Life's darkening slope
 The ground-whirl of the perished leaves of Hope,
 The wind of Death's imperishable wing?

V

HEART'S HOPE

By what word's power, the key of paths untrod,
 Shall I the difficult deeps of Love explore,
 Till parted waves of Song yield up the shore
 Even as that sea which Israel crossed dryshod?
 For lo! in some poor rhythmic period,
 Lady, I fain would tell how evermore
 Thy soul I know not from thy body, nor
 Thee from myself, neither our love from God.
 Yea, in God's name, and Love's, and thine, would I
 Draw from one loving heart such evidence
 As to all hearts all things shall signify;
 Tender as dawn's first lull-fire, and intense
 As instantaneous penetrating sense,
 In Spring's birth-hour, of other Springs gone by.

XV

THE BIRTH-BOND

HAVE you not noted, in some family
 Where two were born of a first marriage-bed,
 How still they own their gracious bond, though fed
 And nursed on the forgotten breast and knee?—
 How to their father's children they shall be
 In act and thought of one goodwill; but each
 Shall for the other have, in silence speech,
 And in a word complete community?
 Even so, when first I saw you, seemed it, love,
 That among soul's allied to mine was yet
 One nearer kindred than life hinted of.
 O born with me somewhere that men forget,
 And though in years of sight and sound unmet,
 Known for my soul's birth-partner well enough!

XIX

SILENT NOON

YOUR hands lie open in the long fresh grass,—
 The finger-points look through like rosy blooms:
 Your eyes smile peace. The pasture gleams and glooms
 'Neath billowing skies that scatter and amass.
 All round our nest, far as the eye can pass,
 Are golden kingcup-fields with silver edge
 Where the cow-parsley skirts the hawthorn-hedge.
 'Tis visible silence, still as the hour-glass.
 Deep in the sun-searched growths the dragon-fly
 Hangs like a blue thread loosened from the sky:—
 So this winged hour is dropped to us from above.
 Oh! clasp we to our hearts, for deathless dower,
 This close-companioned inarticulate hour
 When twofold silence was the song of love.

XXVI

MID-RAPTURE

THOU lovely and belovèd, thou my love;
 Whose kiss seems still the first; whose summoning eyes,
 Even now, as for our love-world's new sunrise,
 Shed very dawn; whose voice, attuned aboye

All modulation of the deep-bowered dove,
 Is like a hand laid softly on the soul;
 Whose hand is like a sweet voice to control
 Those worn tired brows it hath the keeping of:—
 What word can answer to thy word,—what gaze
 To thine, which now absorbs within its sphere
 My worshipped face, till I am mirrored there
 Light-circled in a heaven of deep-drawn rays?
 What clasp, what kiss mine inmost heart can prove,
 O lovely and belovèd, O my love?

XXXI

HER GIFTS

HIGH grace, the dower of queens; and therewithal
 Some wood-born wonder's sweet simplicity;
 A glance like water brimming with the sky
 Or hyacinth-light where forest-shadows fall;
 Such thrilling pallor of cheek as doth enthrall
 The heart; a mouth whose passionate forms imply
 All music and all silence held thereby;
 Deep golden locks, her sovereign coronal;
 A round reared neck, meet column of Love's shrine
 To cling to when the heart takes sanctuary;
 Hands which for ever at Love's bidding be,
 And soft-stirred feet still answering to his sign:—

These are her gifts, as tongue may tell them o'er.
 Breathe low her name, my soul; for that means more.

XXXIV

THE DARK GLASS

NOT I myself know all my love for thee:
 How should I reach so far, who cannot weigh
 To-morrow's dower by gage of yesterday?
 Shall birth and death, and all dark names that be
 As doors and windows bared to some loud sea,
 Lash deaf mine ears and blind my face with spray;
 And shall my sense pierce love,—the last relay
 And ultimate outpost of eternity?

Lo! what am I to Love, the lord of all?
 One murmuring shell he gathers from the sand,—
 One little heart-flame sheltered in his hand.
 Yet through thine eyes he grants me clearest call
 And veriest touch of powers primordial
 That any hour-girt life may understand.

XLIX

WILLOWWOOD

I SAT with Love upon a woodside well,
 Leaning across the water, I and he;
 Nor ever did he speak nor looked at me,
 But touched his lute wherein was audible
 The certain secret thing he had to tell:
 Only our mirrored eyes met silently
 In the low wave; and that sound came to be
 The passionate voice I knew; and my tears fell.
 And at their fall, his eyes beneath grew hers;
 And with his foot and with his wing-feathers
 He swept the spring that watered my heart's drouth.
 Then the dark ripples spread to waving hair,
 And as I stooped, her own lips rising there
 Bubbled with brimming kisses at my mouth.

LXXVIII

BODY'S BEAUTY

Of Adam's first wife, Lilith, it is told
 (The witch he loved before the gift of Eve,)
 That, ere the snake's, her sweet tongue could deceive,
 And her enchanted hair was the first gold.
 And still she sits, young while the earth is old,
 And, subtly of herself contemplative,
 Draws men to watch the bright web she can weave,
 Till heart and body and life are in its hold.
 The rose and poppy are her flowers: for where
 Is he not found, O Lilith! whom shed scent
 And soft-shed kisses and soft sleep shall snare?
 Lo! as that youth's eyes burned at thine, so went

Thy spell through him, and left his straight neck bent,
And round his heart one strangling golden hair.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti [1828-1882]

SONNETS

MEETING

THEY made the chamber sweet with flowers and leaves,
And the bed sweet with flowers on which I lay;
While my soul, love-bound, loitered on its way.
I did not hear the birds about the eaves,
Nor hear the reapers talk among the sheaves:
Only my soul kept watch from day to day,
My thirsty soul kept watch for one away:—
Perhaps he loves, I thought, remembers, grieves.
At length there came the step upon the stair,
Upon the lock the old familiar hand:
Then first my spirit seemed to scent the air
Of Paradise; then first the tardy sand
Of time ran golden; and I felt my hair
Put on a glory, and my soul expand.

THE FIRST DAY

I WISH I could remember the first day,
First hour, first moment of your meeting me,
If bright or dim the season, it might be
Summer or Winter for aught I can say;
So unrecorded did it slip away,
So blind was I to see and to foresee,
So dull to mark the budding of my tree
That would not blossom yet for many a May.
If only I could recollect it, such
A day of days! I let it come and go
As traceless as a thaw of bygone snow;
It seemed to mean so little, meant so much;
If only now I could recall that touch,
First touch of hand in hand—Did one but know!

REMEMBER

REMEMBER me when I am gone away,
 Gone far away into the silent land;
 When you can no more hold me by the hand,
 Nor I half turn to go, yet turning stay.
 Remember me when no more, day by day,
 You tell me of our future that you planned:
 Only remember me; you understand
 It will be late to counsel then or pray.
 Yet if you should forget me for a while
 And afterwards remember, do not grieve:
 For if the darkness and corruption leave
 A vestige of the thoughts that once I had,
 Better by far you should forget and smile
 Than that you should remember and be sad.

REST

O EARTH, lie heavily upon her eyes;
 Seal her sweet eyes weary of watching, Earth;
 Lie close around her; leave no room for mirth
 With its harsh laughter, nor for sound of sighs.
 She hath no questions, she hath no replies,
 Hushed in and curtained with a blessedèd dearth
 Of all that irked her from the hour of birth;
 With stillness that is almost Paradise.
 Darkness more clear than noonday holdeth her,
 Silence more musical than any song;
 Even her very heart has ceased to stir
 Until the morning of Eternity
 Her rest shall not begin nor end, but be;
 And when she wakes she will not think it long.

Christina Georgina Rossetti [1830-1894]

HOW MY SONGS OF HER BEGAN

God made my lady lovely to behold;—
 Above the painter's dream he set her face,
 And wrought her body in divinest grace;
 He touched the brown hair with a sense of gold,

And in the perfect form He did enfold
What was alone as perfect, the sweet heart;
Knowledge most rare to her He did impart,
And filled with love and worship all her days.
And then God thought Him how it would be well
To give her music, and to Love He said,
“Bring thou some minstrel now that he may tell
How fair and sweet a thing My hands have made.”
Then at Love’s call I came, bowed down my head,
And at His will my lyre grew audible.

Philip Bourke Marston [1850-1887]

AT THE LAST

BECAUSE the shadows deepened verily,—
Because the end of all seemed near, forsooth,—
Her gracious spirit, ever quick to ruth,
Had pity on her bond-slave, evēn on me.
She came in with the twilight noiselessly,
Fair as a rose, immaculate as Truth;
She leaned above my wrecked and wasted youth;
I felt her presence, which I could not see.
“God keep you, my poor friend,” I heard her say;
And then she kissed my dry, hot lips and eys.
Kiss *thou* the next kiss, quiet Death, I pray;
Be instant on this hour, and so surprise
My spirit while the vision seems to stay;
Take thou the heart with the heart’s Paradise.

Philip Bourke Marston [1850-1887]

TO ONE WHO WOULD MAKE A CONFESSION

OH! leave the past to bury its own dead.
The past is naught to us, the present all.
What need of last year’s leaves to strew Love’s bed?
What need of ghost to grace a festival?
I would not, if I could, those days recall,
Those days not ours. For us the feast is spread,
The lamps are lit, and music plays withal.
Then let us love and leave the rest unsaid.

This island is our home. Around it roar
 Great gulfs and oceans, channels, straits and seas.
 What matter in what wreck we reached the shore,
 So we both reached it? We can mock at these.

Oh! leave the past, if past indeed there be;
 I would not know it; I would know but thee.

Wilfred Scawen Blunt [1840-

LOVE IN THE WINDS

WHEN I am standing on a mountain crest,
 Or hold the tiller in the dashing spray,
 My love of you leaps foaming in my breast,
 Shouts with the winds and sweeps to their foray;
 My heart bounds with the horses of the sea,
 And plunges in the wild ride of the night,
 Flaunts in the teeth of tempest the large glee
 That rides out Fate and welcomes gods to fight.
 Ho, love, I laugh aloud for love of you,
 Glad that our love is fellow to rough weather,—
 No fretful orchid hothoused from the dew,
 But hale and hardy as the highland heather,
 Rejoicing in the wind that stings and thrills,
 Comrade of ocean, playmate of the hills.

Richard Hovey [1864-1900]

“WERE BUT MY SPIRIT LOOSED UPON THE AIR”

WERE but my spirit loosed upon the air,—
 By some High Power who could Life's chains unbind,
 Set free to seek what most it longs to find,—
 To no proud Court of Kings would I repair:
 I would but climb, once more, a narrow stair,
 When day was wearing late, and dusk was kind;
 And one should greet me to my failings blind,
 Content so I but shared his twilight there.
 Nay! well I know he waits not as of old,—
 I could not find him in the old-time place,—

I must pursue him, made by sorrow bold,
Through worlds unknown, in strange celestial race,
Whose mystic round no traveller has told,
From star to star, until I see his face.

Louise Chandler Moulton [1835-1908]

RENOUNCEMENT

I MUST not think of thee; and, tired yet strong,
I shun the love that lurks in all delight—
The love of thee—and in the blue heaven's height,
And in the dearest passage of a song.
Oh, just beyond the fairest thoughts that throng
This breast, the thought of thee waits hidden yet bright;
But it must never, never come in sight;
I must stop short of thee the whole day long.
But when sleep comes to close each difficult day,
When night gives pause to the long watch I keep,
And all my bonds I needs must loose apart,
Must doff my will as raiment laid away,—
With the first dream that comes with the first sleep
I run, I run, I am gathered to thy heart.

Alice Meynell [1853-]

“MY LOVE FOR THEE”

My love for thee doth march like armèd men,
Against a queenly city they would take.
Along the army's front its banners shake;
Across the mountain and the sun-smit plain
It steadfast sweeps as sweeps the steadfast rain;
And now the trumpet makes the still air quake,
And now the thundering cannon doth awake
Echo on echo, echoing loud again.
But, lo! the conquest higher than bard e'er sung:
Instead of answering cannon, proud surrender!
Joyful the iron gates are open flung
And, for the conqueror, welcome gay and tender!
O, bright the invader's path with tribute flowers,
While comrade flags flame forth on wall and towers!

Richard Watson Gilder [1844-1909]

SONNETS

AFTER THE ITALIAN

I KNOW not if I love her overmuch;
 But this I know, that when unto her face
 She lifts her hand, which rests there, still, a space,
 Then slowly falls—'tis I who feel that touch.
 And when she sudden shakes her head, with such
 A look, I soon her secret meaning trace.
 So when she runs I think 'tis I who race.
 Like a poor cripple who has lost his crutch
 I am if she is gone; and when she goes,
 I know not why, for that is a strange art—
 As if myself should from myself depart.
 I know not if I love her more than those
 Who long her light have known; but for the rose
 She covers in her hair, I'd give my heart.

I like her gentle hand that sometimes strays,
 To find the place, through the same book with mine;
 I like her feet; and O, those eyes divine!
 And when we say farewell, perhaps she stays
 Love-lINGERING—then hurries on her ways,
 As if she thought, "To end my pain and thine."
 I like her voice better than new-made wine;
 I like the mandolin whereon she plays.
 And I like, too, the cloak I saw her wear,
 And the red scarf that her white neck doth cover,
 And well I like the door that she comes through;
 I like the ribbon that doth bind her hair—
 But then, in truth, I am that lady's lover,
 And every new day there is something new.

Richard Watson Gilder [1844-1909]

STANZAS

From "Modern Love"

I

By this he knew she wept with waking eyes:
 That, at his hand's light quiver by her head,
 The strange low sobs that shook their common bed
 Were called into her with a sharp surprise,

And strangled mute, like little gaping snakes,
Dreadfully venomous to him. She lay
Stone-still, and the long darkness flowed away
With muffled pulses. Then as midnight makes
Her giant heart of Memory and Tears
Drink the pale drug of silence, and so beat
Sleep's heavy measure, they from head to feet
Were moveless, looking through their dead black years,
By vain regret scrawled over the blank wall.
Like sculptured effigies they might be seen
Upon their marriage-tomb, the sword between;
Each wishing for the sword that severs all.

II

It ended, and the morrow brought the task.
Her eyes were guilty gates, that let him in
By shutting all too zealous for their sin:
Each sucked a secret, and each wore a mask.
But, oh, the bitter taste her beauty had!
He sickened as at breath of poison-flowers:
A languid humor stole among the hours,
And if their smiles encountered, he went mad,
And raged deep inward, till the light was brown
Before his vision, and the world forgot,
Looked wicked as some old dull murder-spot.
A star with lurid beams, she seemed to crown
The pit of infamy: and then again
He fainted on his vengefulness, and strove
To ape the magnanimity of love,
And smote himself, a shuddering heap of pain.

III

This was the woman; what now of the man?
But pass him. If he comes beneath a heel,
He shall be crushed until he cannot feel,
Or, being callous, haply till he can.
But he is nothing:—nothing? Only mark
The rich light striking out from her on him!
Ha! what a sense it is when her eyes swim
Across the man she singles, leaving dark

All else! Lord God, who mad'st the thing so fair,
 See that I am drawn to her, even now!
 It cannot be such harm on her cool brow
 To plant a kiss? Yet if I meet him there!
 But she is mine! Ah, no! I know too well
 I claim a star whose light is overcast:
 I claim a phantom-woman in the Past.
 The hour has struck, though I heard not the bell!

XIV

What soul would bargain for a cure that brings
 Contempt the nobler agony to kill?
 Rather let me bear on the bitter ill,
 And strike this rusty bosom with new stings!
 It seems there is another veering fit,
 Since on a gold-haired lady's eyeballs pure,
 I looked with little prospect of a cure,
 The while her mouth's red bow loosed shafts of wit.
 Just heaven! can it be true that jealousy
 Has decked the woman thus? and does her head
 Swim somewhat for possessions forfeited?
 Madam, you teach me many things that be.
 I open an old book, and there I find,
 That "Women still may love whom they deceive."
 Such love I prize not, madam: by your leave,
 The game you play at is not to my mind.

XVI

In our old shipwrecked days there was an hour
 When in the firelight steadily aglow,
 Joined slackly, we beheld the red chasm grow
 Among the clicking coals. Our library-bower
 That eve was left to us: and hushed we sat
 As lovers to whom Time is whispering.
 From sudden-opened doors we heard them sing:
 The nodding elders mixed good wine with chat.
 Well knew we that Life's greatest treasure lay
 With us, and of it was our talk. "Ah, yes!
 Love dies!" I said: I never thought it less.
 She yearned to me that sentence to unsay.

Then when the fire domed blackening, I found
Her cheek was salt against my kiss, and swift
Up the sharp scale of sobs her breast did lift:—
Now am I haunted by that taste! that sound!

XXVI

Love ere he bleeds, an eagle in high skies,
Has earth beneath his wings: from reddened eve
He views the rosy dawn. In vain they weave
The fatal web below while far he flies.
But when the arrow strikes him, there's a change.
He moves but in the track of his spent pain,
Whose red drops are the links of a harsh chain,
Binding him to the ground, with narrow range.
A subtle serpent then has Love become.
I had the eagle in my bosom erst:
Henceforward with the serpent I am cursed.
I can interpret where the mouth is dumb.
Speak, and I see the side-lie of a truth.
Perchance my heart may pardon you this deed:
But be no coward:—you that made Love bleed,
You must bear all the venom of his tooth!

XLI

How many a thing which we cast to the ground,
When others pick it up becomes a gem!
We grasp at all the wealth it is to them;
And by reflected light its worth is found.
Yet for us still 'tis nothing! and that zeal
Of false appreciation quickly fades.
This truth is little known to human shades,
How rare from their own instinct 'tis to feel!
They waste the soul with spurious desire,
That is not the ripe flame upon the bough.
We two have taken up a lifeless vow
To rob a living passion: dust for fire!
Madam is grave, and eyes the clock that tells
Approaching midnight. We have struck despair
Into two hearts. O, look we like a pair
Who for fresh nuptials joyfully yield all else?

XLIX

He found her by the ocean's moaning verge,
 Nor any wicked change in her discerned;
 And she believed his old love had returned,
 Which was her exultation, and her scourge.
 She took his hand, and walked with him, and seemed
 The wife he sought, though shadow-like and dry.
 She had one terror, lest her heart should sigh,
 And tell her loudly she no longer dreamed.
 She dared not say, "This is my breast: look in."
 But there's a strength to help the desperate weak.
 That night he learned how silence best can speak
 The awful things when Pity pleads for Sin.
 About the middle of the night her call
 Was heard, and he came wondering to the bed.
 "Now kiss me, dear! it may be, now!" she said.
 Lethe had passed those lips, and he knew all.

L

Thus piteously Love closed what he begat:
 The union of this ever-diverse pair!
 These two were rapid falcons in a snare,
 Condemned to do the flitting of the bat.
 Lovers beneath the singing sky of May,
 They wandered once; clear as the dew on flowers:
 But they fed not on the advancing hours:
 Their hearts held cravings for the buried day.
 Then each applied to each that fatal knife,
 Deep questioning, which probes to endless dole.
 Ah, what a dusty answer gets the soul
 When hot for certainties in this our life!—
 In tragic hints here see what evermore
 Moves dark as yonder midnight ocean's force,
 Thumping like ramping hosts of warrior horse,
 To throw that faint thin line upon the shore!

George Meredith [1828-1909]

SONNETS

From "Sonnets to Miranda"

I

DAUGHTER of her whose face, and lofty name
Prenuptial, of old States and Cities speak,
Where lands of wine look north to peak on peak
Of the overwatching Alps: through her, you claim
Kinship with vanished Power, unvanished Fame;
And midst a world grown colorless and bleak
I see the blood of Doges in your cheek,
And in your hair the Titian tints of flame.
Daughter of England too, you first drew breath
Where our coy Springs to our coy Summers yield;
And you descend from one whose lance and shield
Were with the grandsire of Elizabeth,
When the Plantagenet saw the avenger Death
Toward him spurring over Bosworth field.

II

If you had lived in that more stately time
When men remembered the great Tudor queen,
To noblest verse your name had wedded been,
And you for ever crowned with golden rhyme.
If, mid Lorenzo's Florence, made sublime
By Art's Re-Birth, you had moved, a Muse serene,
The mightiest limners had revealed your mien
To all the ages and each wondering clime.
Fled are the singers that from language drew
Its virgin secrets; and in narrow space
The mightiest limners sleep: and only He,
The Eternal Artist, still creates anew
That which is fairer than all song—the grace
That takes the world into captivity.

III

I dare but sing of you in such a strain
As may beseem the wandering harper's tongue,
Who of the glory of his Queen hath sung,
Outside her castle gates in wind and rain.

She, seated mid the noblest of her train,
 In her great halls with pictured arras hung,
 Hardly can know what melody hath rung
 Through the forgetting night, and rung in vain.
 He, with one word from her to whom he brings
 The loyal heart that she alone can sway,
 Would be made rich for ever; but he sings
 Of queenhood too aloof, too great, to say
 "Sing on, sing on, O minstrel"—though he flings
 His soul to the winds that whirl his songs away.

V

I cast these lyric offerings at your feet,
 And ask you but to fling them not away:
 There suffer them to rest, till even they,
 By happy nearness to yourself, grow sweet.
 He that hath shaped and wrought them holds it meet
 That you be sung, not in some artless way,
 But with such pomp and ritual as when May
 Sends her full choir, the thronèd Morn to greet.
 With something caught from your own lofty air,
 With something learned from your own highborn grace,
 Song must approach your presence; must forbear
 All light and easy accost; and yet abase
 Its own proud spirit in awe and reverence there,
 Before the Wonder of your form and face.

VI

I move amid your throng, I watch you hold
 Converse with many who are noble and fair,
 Yourself the noblest and the fairest there,
 Reigning supreme, crowned with that living gold.
 I talk with men whose names have been enrolled
 In England's book of honor; and I share
 With these *one* honor—your regard; and wear
 Your friendship as a jewel of worth untold.
 And then I go from out your spherèd light
 Into a world which still seems full of You.
 I know the stars are yonder, that possess
 Their ancient seats, heedless what mortals do;

But I behold in all the range of Night
Only the splendor of your loveliness.

VIII

If I had never known your face at all,
Had only heard you speak, beyond thick screen
Of leaves, in an old garden, when the sheen
Of morning dwelt on dial and ivied wall,
I think your voice had been enough to call
Yourself before me, in living vision seen,
So pregnant with your Essence had it been,
So charged with You, in each soft rise and fall.
At least I know, that when upon the night
With chanted word your voice lets loose your soul,
I am pierced, I am pierced and cloven, with Delight
That hath all Pain within it, and the whole
World's tears, all ecstasy of inward sight,
And the blind cry of all the seas that roll.

William Watson [1858-

SONNETS

From "Thysia"

II

TWIN songs there are, of joyance, or of pain;
One of the morning lark in midmost sky,
When falls to earth a mist, a silver rain,
A glittering cascade of melody;
And mead and wold and the wide heaven rejoice,
And praise the Maker; but alone I kneel
In sorrowing prayer. Then wanes the day; a voice
Trembles along the dusk, till peal on peal
It pierces every living heart that hears,
Pierces and burns and purifies like fire;
Again I kneel under the starry spheres,
And all my soul seems healed, and lifted higher,
Nor could that jubilant song of day prevail
Like thine of tender grief, O nightingale.

III

Bow down, my song, before her presence high,
 In that far world where you must seek her now;
 Say that you bring to her no sonnetry,
 But plain-set anguish of the breast or brow;
 Say that on earth I sang to her alone,
 But now, while in her heaven she sits divine,
 Turning, I tell the world my bitter moan,
 Bidding it share its hopes and griefs with mine,
 Versing not what I would, but what I must,
 Wail of the wind, or sobbing of the wave;
 Ah! say you raised my bowed head from the dust,
 And held me backward from a willful grave;
 Say this, and her sweet pity will approve,
 And bind yet closer her dead bond of love.

VII

I watch beside you in your silent room;
 Without, the chill rain falls, life dies away,
 The dead leaves drip, and the fast-gathering gloom
 Closes around this brief November day,
 First day of holy death, of sacred rest;
 I kiss your brow, calm, beautiful and cold,
 I lay my yearning arms across your breast,
 I claim our darling rapture as of old;
 Dear heart, I linger but a little space,
 Sweet wife, I come to your new world ere long;
 This lily—keep it till our next embrace,
 While the mute Angel makes our love more strong,
 While here I cling, in life's short agony,
 To God, and to your deathless memory.

XVI

Comes the New Year; wailing the north winds blow;
 In her cold, lonely grave my dead love lies;
 Dead lies the stiffened earth beneath the snow,
 And blinding sleet blots out the desolate skies;
 I stand between the living and the dead;
 Hateful to me is life, hateful is death;

Her life was sad, and on that narrow bed
 She will not turn, nor wake with human breath.
 I kneel between the evil and the good;
 The struggle o'er, this one sweet faith have I—
 Though life and death be dimly understood,
 She loved me; I loved her; love cannot die;
 Go then thy way with thine accustomed cheer,
 Nor heed my churlish greeting, O New Year.

XXIII

Like some lone miser, dear, behold me stand,
 To count my treasures, and their worth extol:—
 A last word penciled by that poor left hand;
 Two kindred names on the same gentle scroll,
 (I found it near your pillow,) traced below;
 This little scarf you made, our latest pride;
 The violet I digged so long ago,
 That nestled in your bosom till you died;
 But dearest to my heart, whereon it lies,
 Is one warm tress of your luxuriant hair,
 Still present to my touch, my lips, my eyes,
 Forever changeless, and forever fair,
 And even in your grave, beauteous and free
 From the cold grasp of mutability.

XXXVI

So sang I in the springtime of my years—
 “There’s nothing we can call our own but love;”
 So let me murmur now that winter nears,
 And even in death the deathless truth approve.
 Oft have I seen the slow, the broadening river
 Roll its glad waters to the parent sea;
 Death is the call of love to love; the giver
 Claims his own gift for some new mystery.
 In boundless love divine the heavens are spread,
 In wedded love is earth’s divinest store,
 And he that liveth to himself is dead,
 And he that lives for love lives evermore;
 Only in love can life’s true path be trod;
 Love is self-giving; therefore love is God.

XXXVII

Hear, O Self-Giver, infinite as good;
 This faith, at least, my wavering heart should hold,
 Nor find in dark regret its daily food,
 But catch the gleam of glories yet untold.
 Yea, even on earth, beloved, as love well knew,
 Brief absence brought our fond returning kiss,
 So let my soul to God's great world and you
 Look onward with sweet pain of secret bliss;—
 O sunset sky and lonely gleaming star,
 Your beauty thrills me from the bound of space,
 O Love, thy loveliness shows best afar,
 And only Heaven shall give thee perfect grace;
 Grant then, dear Lord, that all who love may be
 Heirs of Thy glorious Immortality.

XLV

How shall I tell the measure of my love?
 'Tis vain that I have given thee vows and tears,
 Or striven in verse my tenderness to prove,
 Or held thy hand in journeyings through the years;
 Vain that I follow now with hastening feet,
 And sing thy death, still murmuring in my song,
 "Only for thee I would the strain were sweet,
 Only for thee I would the words were strong;"
 Vain even that I closed with death, and fought
 To hold thee longer in a world so dear,
 Vain that I count a weary world as naught,
 That I would die to bring thee back; I hear
 God answer me from heaven, O angel wife—
 "To prove thy love, live thou a nobler life."

Morton Luce [18 -

SONNETS

From "Sonnets from the Portuguese"

I

I THOUGHT once how Theocritus had sung
 Of the sweet years, the dear and wished-for years,
 Who each one in a gracious hand appears
 To bear a gift for mortals, old or young:

And, as I mused it in his antique tongue,
I saw, in gradual vision through my tears,
The sweet, sad years, the melancholy years,
Those of my own life, who by turns had flung
A shadow across me. Straightway I was 'ware,
So weeping, how a mystic Shape did move
Behind me, and drew me backward by the hair;
And a voice said in mastery, while I strove,—
“Guess now who holds thee?”—“Death,” I said. But, there,
The silver answer rang,—“Not Death, but Love.”

III

Unlike are we, unlike, O princely Heart!
Unlike our uses and our destinies.
Our ministering two angels look surprise
On one another, as they strike athwart
Their wings in passing. Thou, bethink thee, art
A guest for queens to social pageantries,
With gages from a hundred brighter eyes
Than tears even can make mine, to play thy part
Of chief musician. What hast *thou* to do
With looking from the lattice-lights at me,
A poor, tired, wandering singer, singing through
The dark, and leaning up a cypress tree?
The chrism is on thine head,—on mine, the dew,—
And Death must dig the level where these agree.

VI

Go from me. Yet I feel that I shall stand
Henceforward in thy shadow. Nevermore
Alone upon the threshold of my door
Of individual life, I shall command
The uses of my soul, nor lift my hand
Serenely in the sunshine as before,
Without the sense of that which I forbore,—
Thy touch upon the palm. The widest land
Doom takes to part us, leaves thy heart in mine
With pulses that beat double. What I do
And what I dream include thee, as the wine
Must taste of its own grapes. And when I sue

God for myself, He hears that name of thine,
And sees within my eyes the tears of two.

VII

The face of all the world is changed, I think,
Since first I heard the footsteps of thy soul
Move still, oh, still, beside me, as they stole
Betwixt me and the dreadful outer brink
Of obvious death, where I, who thought to sink,
Was caught up into love, and taught the whole
Of life in a new rhythm. The cup of dole
God gave for baptism; I am fain to drink,
And praise its sweetness, Sweet, with thee anear.
The name of country, heaven, are changed away
For where thou art or shalt be, there or here;
And this . . . this lute and song . . . loved yesterday,
(The singing angels know) are only dear
Because thy name moves right in what they say.

VIII

What can I give thee back, O liberal
And princely giver, who hast brought the gold
And purple of thine heart, unstained, untold,
And laid them on the outside of the wall
For such as I to take or leave withal,
In unexpected largess? Am I cold,
Ungrateful, that for these most manifold
High gifts, I render nothing back at all?
Not so; not cold,—but very poor instead.
Ask God who knows. For frequent tears have run
The colors from my life, and left so dead
And pale a stuff, it were not fitly done
To give the same as pillow to thy head.
Go farther! let it serve to trample on.

IX

Can it be right to give what I can give?
To let thee sit beneath the fall of tears
As salt as mine, and hear the sighing years
Re-sighing on my lips renunciative

Through those infrequent smiles which fail to live
For all thy adjurations? O my fears,
That this can scarce be right! We are not peers
So to be lovers; and I own, and grieve,
That givers of such gifts as mine are, must
Be counted with the ungenerous. Out, alas!
I will not soil thy purple with my dust,
Nor breathe my poison on thy Venice-glass,
Nor give thee any love—which were unjust.
Beloved, I only love thee! let it pass.

X

Yet, love, mere love, is beautiful indeed
And worthy of acceptation. Fire is bright,
Let temple burn, or flax; an equal light
Leaps in the flame from cedar-plank or weed:
And love is fire. And when I say at need
I love thee . . . mark! . . . I love thee—in thy sight
I stand transfigured, glorified aright,
With conscience of the new rays that proceed
Out of my face toward thine. There's nothing low
In love, when love the lowest: meanest creatures
Who love God, God accepts while loving so.
And what I *feel*, across the inferior features
Of what I *am*, doth flash itself, and show
How that great work of Love enhances Nature's.

XII

Indeed this very love which is my boast,
And which, when rising up from breast to brow,
Doth crown me with a ruby large enow
To draw men's eyes and prove the inner cost,—
This love even, all my worth, to the uttermost,
I should not love withal, unless that thou
Hadst set me an example, shown me how,
When first thine earnest eyes with mine were crossed,
And love called love. And thus, I cannot speak
Of love even, as a good thing of my own:
Thy soul hath snatched up mine all faint and weak,
And placed it by thee on a golden throne,—

And that I love (O soul, we must be meek!)
Is by thee only, whom I love alone.

XIV

If thou must love me, let it be for naught
Except for love's sake only. Do not say
“I love her for her smile—her look—her way
Of speaking gently,—for a trick of thought
That falls in well with mine, and certes brought
A sense of pleasant ease on such a day”—
For these things in themselves, Belovèd, may
Be changed, or change for thee,—and love, so wrought,
May be unwrought so. Neither love me for
Thine own dear pity's wiping my cheeks dry,—
A creature might forget to weep, who bore
Thy comfort long, and lose thy love thereby!
But love me for love's sake, that evermore
Thou may'st love on, through love's eternity.

XVII

My poet, thou canst touch on all the notes
God set between His After and Before,
And strike up and strike off the general roar
Of the rushing worlds a melody that floats
In a serene air purely. Antidotes
Of medicated music, answering for
Mankind's forlornest uses, thou canst pour
From thence into their ears. God's will devotes
Thine to such ends, and mine to wait on thine.
How, Dearest, wilt thou have me for most use?
A hope, to sing by gladly? or a fine
Sad memory, with thy songs to interfuse?
A shade, in which to sing—of palm or pine?
A grave, on which to rest from singing? Choose.

XVIII

I never gave a lock of hair away
To a man, Dearest, except this to thee,
Which now upon my fingers thoughtfully
I ring out to the full brown length and say

"Take it." My day of youth went yesterday;
 My hair no longer bounds to my foot's glee,
 Nor plant I it from rose or myrtle-tree,
 As girls do, any more: it only may
 Now shade on two pale cheeks the mark of tears,
 Taught drooping from the head that hangs aside
 Through sorrow's trick. I thought the funeral-shears
 Would take this first, but Love is justified,—
 Take it thou,—finding pure, from all those years,
 The kiss my mother left here when she died.

XXI

Say over again, and yet once over again,
 That thou dost love me. Though the word repeated
 Should seem "a cuckoo-song," as thou dost treat it,
 Remember, never to the hill or plain,
 Valley and wood, without her cuckoo-strain,
 Comes the fresh Spring in all her green completed.
 Belovèd, I, amid the darkness greeted
 By a doubtful spirit-voice, in that doubt's pain
 Cry: "Speak once more—thou lovest!" Who can fear
 Too many stars, though each in heaven shall roll,
 Too many flowers, though each shall crown the year?
 Say thou dost love me, love me, love me,—toll
 The silver iterance!—only minding, Dear,
 To love me also in silence with thy soul.

XXII

When our two souls stand up erect and strong,
 Face to face, silent, drawing nigh and nigher,
 Until the lengthening wings break into fire
 At either curvèd point,—what bitter wrong
 Can the earth do us, that we should not long
 Be here contented? Think. In mounting higher,
 The angels would press on us and aspire
 To drop some golden orb of perfect song
 Into our deep, dear silence. Let us stay
 Rather on earth, Belovèd,—where the unfit
 Contrarious moods of men recoil away
 And isolate pure spirits, and permit

A place to stand and love in for a day,
With darkness and the death-hour rounding it.

xxviii

My letters! all dead paper, mute and white!
And yet they seem alive and quivering
Against my tremulous hands which loose the string
And let them drop down on my knee to-night.
This said,—he wished to have me in his sight
Once, as a friend: this fixed a day in spring
To come and touch my hand . . . a simple thing,
Yet I wept for it!—this, . . . the paper's light . . .
Said, *Dear, I love thee*; and I sank and quailed,
As if God's future thundered on my past.
This said, *I am thine*,—and so its ink has paled
With lying at my heart that beat too fast.
And this . . . O Love, thy words have ill availed,
If, what this said, I dared repeat at last!

xxxviii

First time he kissed me, he but only kissed
The fingers of this hand wherewith I write;
And ever since, it grew more clean and white,
Slow to world-greetings, quick with its “Oh, list,”
When the angels speak. A ring of amethyst
I could not wear here, plainer to my sight,
Than that first kiss. The second passed in height
The first, and sought the forehead, and half missed,
Half falling on the hair. O beyond meed!
That was the chrism of love, which love's own crown,
With sanctifying sweetness, did precede.
The third upon my lips was folded down
In perfect, purple state; since when, indeed,
I have been proud, and said, “My love, my own!”

xliv

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.

I love thee to the level of everyday's
Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints,—I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life!—and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806–1861]

ONE WORD MORE

TO E. B. B.

I

THERE they are, my fifty men and women
Naming me the fifty poems finished!
Take them, Love, the book and me together;
Where the heart lies, let the brain lie also.

II

Rafael made a century of sonnets,
Made and wrote them in a certain volume
Dinted with the silver-pointed pencil
Else he only used to draw Madonnas:
These, the world might view—but one, the volume.
Who that one, you ask? Your heart instructs you.
Did she live and love it all her lifetime?
Did she drop, his lady of the sonnets,
Die, and let it drop beside her pillow
Where it lay in place of Rafael's glory,
Rafael's cheek so duteous and so loving—
Cheek, the world was wont to hail a painter's,
Rafael's cheek, her love had turned a poet's?

III

You and I would rather read that volume,
(Taken to his beating bosom by it)
Lean and list the bosom-beats of Rafael,
Would we not? than wonder at Madonnas—
Her, San Sisto names, and Her, Foligno,
Her, that visits Florence in a vision,
Her, that's left with lilies in the Louvre—
Seen by us and all the world in circle.

IV

You and I will never read that volume.
Guido Reni, like his own eye's apple

Guarded long the treasure-book and loved it.
 Guido Reni dying, all Bologna
 Cried, and the world cried too, "Ours, the treasure!"
 Suddenly, as rare things will, it vanished.

V

Dante once prepared to paint an angel:
 Whom to please? You whisper "Beatrice."
 While he mused and traced it and retraced it,
 (Peradventure with a pen corroded
 Still by drops of that hot ink he dipped for,
 When, his left hand i' the hair o' the wicked,
 Back he held the brow and pricked its stigma,
 Bit into the live man's flesh for parchment,
 Loosed him, laughed to see the writing rankle,
 Let the wretch go festering through Florence)—
 Dante, who loved well because he hated,
 Hated wickedness that hinders loving,
 Dante standing, studying his angel,—
 In there broke the folk of his Inferno.
 Says he—"Certain people of importance"
 (Such he gave his daily dreadful line to)
 "Entered and would seize, forsooth, the poet."
 Says the poet—"Then I stopped my painting."

VI

You and I would rather see that angel,
 Painted by the tenderness of Dante,
 Would we not?—than read a fresh Inferno.

VII

You and I will never see that picture.
 While he mused on love and Beatrice,
 While he softened o'er his outlined angel,
 In they broke, those "people of importance":
 We and Bice bear the loss forever.

VIII

What of Rafael's sonnets, Dante's picture?
 This: no artist lives and loves, that longs not

Once, and only once, and for one only,
 (Ah, the prize!) to find his love a language
 Fit and fair and simple and sufficient—
 Using nature that's an art to others,
 Not, this one time, art that's turned his nature.
 Ay, of all the artists living, loving,
 None but would forego his proper dowry,—
 Does he paint? he fain would write a poem,—
 Does he write? he fain would paint a picture,
 Put to proof art alien to the artist's,
 Once, and only once, and for one only,
 So to be the man and leave the artist,
 Gain the man's joy, miss the artist's sorrow.

IX

Wherefore? Heaven's gift takes earth's abatement!
 He who smites the rock and spreads the water,
 Bidding drink and live a crowd beneath him,
 Even he, the minute makes immortal,
 Proves, perchance, but mortal in the minute,
 Desecrates, belike, the deed in doing.
 While he smites, how can he but remember,
 So he smote before, in such a peril,
 When they stood and mocked—"Shall smiting help us?"
 When they drank and sneered—"A stroke is easy!"
 When they wiped their mouths and went their journey,
 Throwing him for thanks—"But drought was pleasant."
 Thus old memories mar the actual triumph;
 Thus the doing savors of disrelish;
 Thus achievement lacks a gracious somewhat;
 O'er-importuned brows becloud the mandate,
 Carelessness or consciousness—the gesture.
 For he bears an ancient wrong about him,
 Sees and knows again those phalanxed faces,
 Hears, yet one time more, the 'customed prelude—
 "How shouldst thou of all men, smite, and save us?"
 Guesses what is like to prove the sequel—
 "Egypt's flesh-pots—nay, the drought was better."

X

Oh, the crowd must have emphatic warrant!
Theirs, the Sinai-forehead's cloven brilliance,
Right-arm's rod-sweep, tongue's imperial fiat.
Never dares the man put off the prophet.

XI

Did he love one face from out the thousands,
(Were she Jethro's daughter, white and wifely,
Were she but the *Æthiopian bondslave,*)
He would envy yon dumb patient camel,
Keeping a reserve of scanty water
Meant to save his own life in the desert;
Ready in the desert to deliver
(Kneeling down to let his breast be opened)
Hoard and life together for his mistress.

XII

I shall never, in the years remaining,
Paint you pictures, no, nor carve you statues,
Make you music that should all-express me;
So it seems: I stand on my attainment.
This of verse alone, one life allows me;
Verse and nothing else have I to give you.
Other heights in other lives, God willing:
All the gifts from all the heights, your own, Love!

XIII

Yet a semblance of resource avails us—
Shade so finely touched, love's sense must seize it.
Take these lines, look lovingly and nearly,
Lines I write the first time and the last time.
He who works in fresco, steals a hair-brush,
Curbs the liberal hand, subservient proudly,
Cramps his spirit, crowds its all in little,
Makes a strange art of an art familiar,
Fills his lady's missal-marge with flowerets.
He who blows through bronze, may breathe through silver,
Fitly serenade a slumbrous princess.
He who writes, may write for once as I do.

xiv

Love, you saw me gather men and women,
 Live or dead or fashioned by my fancy,
 Enter each and all, and use their service,
 Speak from every mouth,—the speech, a poem.
 Hardly shall I tell my joys and sorrows,
 Hopes and fears, belief and disbelieving:
 I am mine and yours—the rest be all men's,
 Karshish, Cleon, Norbert, and the fifty.
 Let me speak this once in my true person,
 Not as Lippo, Roland, or Andrea,
 Though the fruit of speech be just this sentence:
 Pray you, look on these my men and women,
 Take and keep my fifty poems finished;
 Where my heart lies, let my brain lie also!
 Poor the speech; be how I speak, for all things.

xv

Not but that you know me! Lo, the moon's self!
 Here in London, yonder late in Florence,
 Still we find her face, the thrice-transfigured.
 Curving on a sky imbrued with color,
 Drifted over Fiesole by twilight,
 Came she, our new crescent of a hair's-breadth.
 Full she flared it, lamping Samminiato,
 Rounder 'twixt the cypresses and rounder,
 Perfect till the nightingales applauded.
 Now, a piece of her old self, impoverished,
 Hard to greet, she traverses the house-roofs,
 Hurries with unhandsome thrift of silver,
 Goes dispiritedly, glad to finish.

xvi

What, there's nothing in the moon noteworthy?
 Nay: for if that moon could love a mortal,
 Use, to charm him (so to fit a fancy),
 All her magic ('tis the old sweet mythos),
 She would turn a new side to her mortal,
 Side unseen of herdsman, huntsman, steersman—

Blank to Zoroaster on his terrace,
Blind to Galileo on his turret,
Dumb to Homer, dumb to Keats—him, even!
Think, the wonder of the moonstruck mortal—
When she turns round, comes again in heaven,
Opens out anew for worse or better!
Proves she like some portent of an iceberg
Swimming full upon the ship it founders,
Hungry with huge teeth of splintered crystals?
Proves she as the paved work of a sapphire
Seen by Moses when he climbed the mountain?
Moses, Aaron, Nadab and Abihu
Climbed and saw the very God, the Highest,
Stand upon the paved work of a sapphire.
Like the bodied heaven in his clearness
Shone the stone, the sapphire of that paved work,
When they ate and drank and saw God also!

XVII

What were seen? None knows, none ever shall know.
Only this is sure—the sight were other,
Not the moon's same side, born late in Florence,
Dying now impoverished here in London.
God be thanked, the meanest of his creatures
Boasts two soul-sides, one to face the world with,
One to show a woman when he loves her!

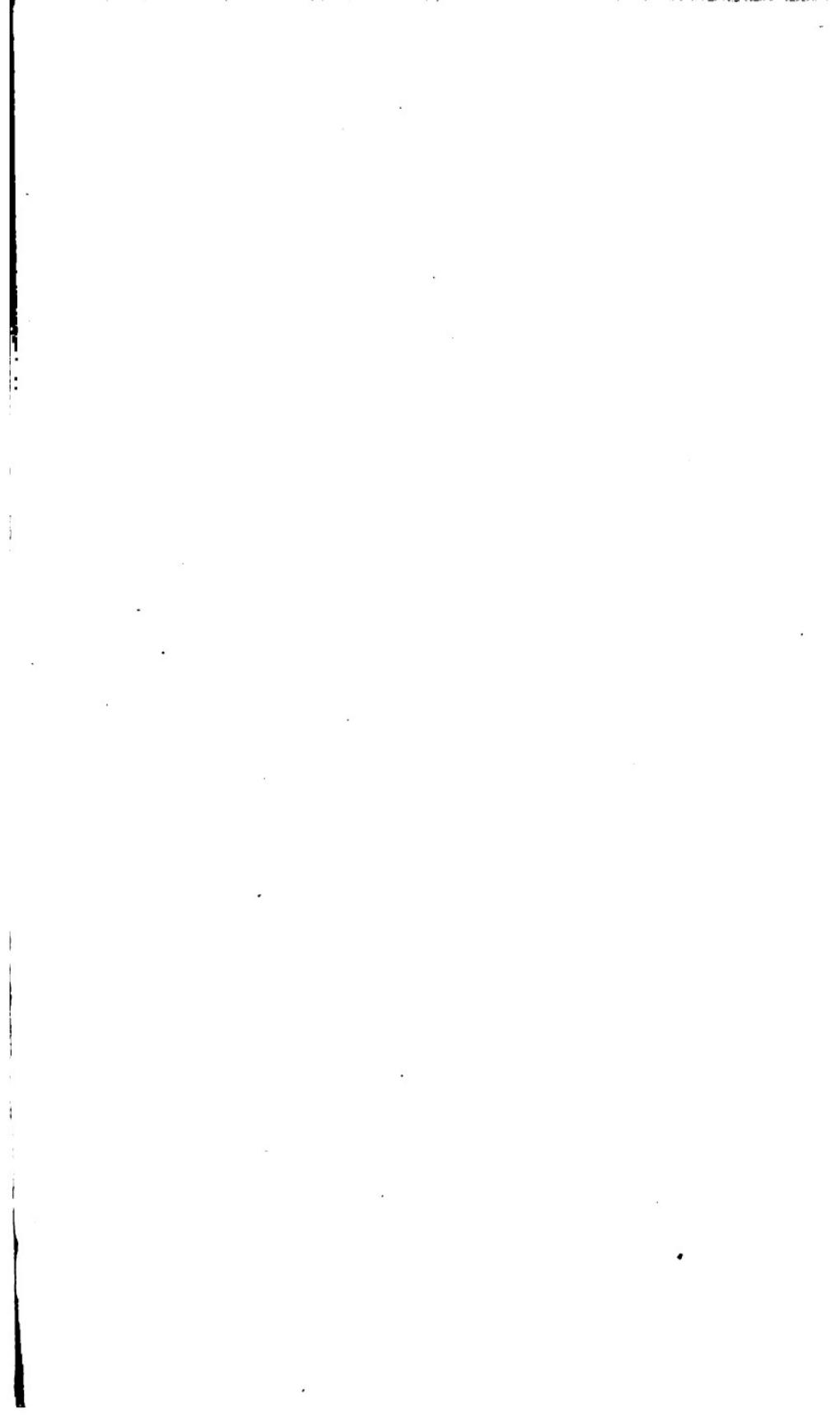
XVIII

This I say of me, but think of you, Love!
This to you—yourself my moon of poets!
Ah, but that's the world's side, there's the wonder,
Thus they see you, praise you, think they know you!
There, in turn I stand with them and praise you—
Out of my own self, I dare to phrase it.
But the best is when I glide from out them,
Cross a step or two of dubious twilight,
Come out on the other side, the novel
Silent silver lights and darks undreamed of,
Where I hush and bless myself with silence.

XIX

Oh, their Rafael of the dear Madonnas,
Oh, their Dante of the dread Inferno,
Wrote one song—and in my brain I sing it,
Drew one angel—borne, see, on my bosom!

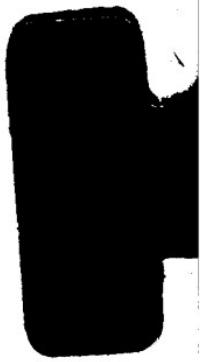
Robert Browning [1812-1889]











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